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**THIS IS
RUSSIA
UN-CENSORED!**

BY EDMUND STEVENS

former Moscow Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

**COMMENDATORY FOREWORD BY
GENERAL WALTER BEDELL SMITH
UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO THE USSR, 1946-1948**

Written with sane and sound objectivity—devoid of hysteria—gives authentic answers to such questions as:

- ★ **CAN ANYONE START HIS OWN BUSINESS IN THE SOVIET UNION?** (SEE CHAPS. V, VI, & VII)
- ★ **WHY DO EVEN HIGH OFFICIALS DREAD THE "M.V.D."?** (SEE CHAPS. XII & XIV)
- ★ **WILL THE REGIMENTED WORK-SLAVES REVOLT?** (SEE CHAP. XXIII)
- ★ **HOW ARE JEWS TREATED IN RUSSIA?** (SEE CHAP. XXI)

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COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

Albert Vacco

THE INNER SECRETS OF COMMUNISM IN ACTION—

by a Man Who Parted the "IRON CURTAIN"!

Edmund Stevens is a newspaperman—a trained observer and fluent writer. For more than ten years he lived and worked in Soviet Russia and its satellite countries. He spoke the language so well that he was often mistaken by Russians for one of their own; he mixed with the people, listened to their loud enthusiasms—and to their whispered complaints; he shared with them their slight pleasures—and shuddered with them at the shadow of the dread Secret Police—the "MYD".

When he returned to America, Stevens brought with him his Russian wife and young son, a sympathy for the Russian people, and an amazing knowledge of the strange and unbelievably powerful government under which they live—and die—or *merely disappear!*

Mr. Stevens' story is shocking, topical, and vital. It tears apart the cloak of mystery that has so long covered the USSR—and objectively *reveals the truth about Communism in action!*

THIS IS
RUSSIA
UN-CENSORED!

by
EDMUND STEVENS

Introduction by Gen. Walter Bedell Smith
(Former U. S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union)

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

By GENERAL WALTER BEDELL SMITH

PROLOGUE

DEPARTURE TO FREE SPEECH	3
I. POLITBURO RIVALS	8
II. RUBBER-STAMP PARLIAMENT, RUBBER-STAMP PARTY	17
III. THE SOVIET ELITE	31
IV. THE PLIGHT OF THE PEASANT	39
V. WHAT IT'S LIKE TO SHOP IN MOSCOW....	44
VI. HOW MUCH GRAFT IN RUSSIAN BUSINESS?	49
VII. RUSSIAN CO-OPERATIVES—NOT QUITE IN STEP	58
VIII. LABOR UNIONS ARE SPEED-UP UNIONS....	63
IX. HOW INDUSTRIALIZED IS RUSSIA?.....	69
X. THE GREAT HUSH-HUSH	77
XI. SIBERIA—HIDING PLACE OF RUSSIAN INDUSTRY	81

XII. MVD—THE "THING" THAT STALKS.....	85
XIII. NO EXIT	89
XIV. AFTERMATH OF THE PURGES	98
XV. SOVIET ARTISTS TOE THE LINE— OR ELSE!	108
XVI. THE INTERNAL PROPAGANDA LINE.....	136
XVII. RUSSIAN CLAIMS TO "FIRSTS"	154
XVIII. PARTY ABOVE SCIENCE	160
XIX. THE AGITATOR'S HANDBOOK	164
XX. THE TRUTH ABOUT JEWS IN RUSSIA.....	171
XXI. THE BALTIC PROVINCES—END OF A BRANCH LINE	180
XXII. FOREIGN ENVOYS AND PRESS CORPS.....	193
XXIII. WILL THE REGIMENTED WORK-SLAVES REVOLT?	202
XXIV. THE VOICE THAT HAUNTS.....	211

FOREWORD

YEARS HAVE PASSED since the first book on the Soviet Union by the young correspondent, Edmund Stevens, appeared in print. These have been years of disillusionment. Gradually the facade of cooperation and common purpose which concealed the long-term objective of our wartime ally has crumpled and the stark hostility of the Communist Soviet Government to the Western ideals has become only too apparent. During this period of disillusionment it has been particularly difficult for close-range observers of the Soviet scene to retain their objectivity. Here Mr. Stevens has been exceptionally fortunate. Fluent in the language, and with an attractive and intelligent Russian wife, he possesses a sympathetic knowledge and understanding of the Russian people which few Westerners have attained. Thus he is able to view events, and the lives of the Soviet people, through the stereoscopic lenses of close personal contact and broad international knowledge. The resulting images as reflected in this book have unusual accuracy, clarity and depth.

A. Blunt

PROLOGUE

DEPARTURE TO FREE SPEECH

AN EVER-WIDENING gap divided us from Soviet soil as the good ship *Byeloostrov* cast off. While Leningrad slipped astern, our immediate feelings were of unrestrained relief.

After years of hope and frustration, our final memory of the U.S.S.R. was a three-hour bout with customs officials that left us angry and exhausted. Every carefully packed article was dragged out and scrutinized. A dydee doll of our daughter's that squeaked when squeezed aroused special suspicion.

Only at the end of a fruitless quest did we learn what they were looking for. At this point the chief inspector accused me of having sold our automobile illegally for gold to a Soviet citizen! I was able to furnish written refutation of this charge—the car in question had been legally transferred to a foreign diplomat—so the officials, looking somewhat crestfallen, permitted us to cram our effects back into trunks and go aboard.

This parting episode was final proof that our move was timely. Of late we had sensed imponderable walls closing in upon us. The air itself was clotted with hate and suspicion. The press attacks on everything American grew in violence and vituperation. Closer to home, no week passed without American correspondents being pilloried as spies.

The anti-American campaign penetrated even to the child world. Our son and daughter were taunted by their neighborhood playmates as "Amerikantsi," by now a term of opprobrium.

Small wonder our last contacts with Soviet life around us disintegrated rapidly. Even the press department of the Foreign Ministry, through which all our official relations were funneled, now virtually ignored us. Our least request was ignored or refused.

All this was bearable as long as it remained impersonal. But early in 1949 we suddenly discovered that we were constantly being spied upon. Whenever someone entered or left the garden gate in front of our one-story log house a curtain in a window opposite was raised slightly.

Young men, too well dressed for loiterers, lounged on nearby corners or strolled back and forth outside. Friends who dropped in were followed home, and in due course called in for questioning. Our next-door neighbors, too, were grilled, and though we had known them for years, they took to avoiding us utterly.

Soon we noted that not only was the house watched, but we ourselves were shadowed wherever we went.

If my wife and I left the house separately by car or taxi, each of us was tailed by a little black German BMW car with four men inside. They tried to be inconspicuous, ducking behind trucks or trolley buses, and whenever we halted, they, too, would pull up at a respectable distance, preferably just behind a corner.

We soon learned their techniques, and one of our favorite sports was to lead them into a blind street and then make a U turn that brought us alongside. This seemed to embarrass them no end, and they would try to crouch down out of sight. The moment we got out of the car, they promptly deployed to strategic street corners or doorways, whence they could watch our moves.

They also followed us if we took the Metro or streetcar,

and unless through a series of complex maneuvers we managed to shake them for a bit, they were on our trail from morning until we turned in.

It long has been commonly assumed that all telephones serving foreigners are connected to a central listening post—and on more than one occasion we had evidence that our line was carefully checked. However, there had not been, so we thought, any further penetration of the privacy of our home.

Then, one day, we caught Nastia rifling our personal desk drawers and collecting note pads and address books. Nastia had come to work for us back in 1946 as an apple-cheeked peasant girl fresh from the village. After one year, during which my wife trained her as a tolerable housemaid, she left to marry a policeman.

We next heard from her last spring, when she called up and asked for her job back. Since nobody wanted to work for Americans and servants were hard to get, my wife agreed to take her on. With that address book incident, we realized that Nastia, no longer the apple-cheeked peasant girl, had been assigned to us. We also found that she was in the habit of cross-examining our daughter, aged seven, who has that endearing childish knack of total recall for grown-up conversations overheard—drawing her out with the gift of some trivial toy.

Before these troubles, we had lived in Moscow as peacefully and unmolested as anywhere else in the world. Though we saw few Russian friends, we took part in the social life of the closely knit foreign colony, which can provide a nightly party for those thus inclined.

We enjoyed to the full the splendid theaters, concerts, and other cultural advantages of Moscow. But we had

trouble keeping art, music and dancing teachers for the children. There were plenty available, well qualified and reasonable. But the moment they discovered we were Americans—usually after the second or third lesson, we could not keep daughter from coming out with it—they bowed out on some pretext.

Even our German shepherd pup was subject to this same anti-foreign discrimination. We tried in vain to enter him in a training school, or, failing that, arrange with some trainer for private instruction. Everything connected with dog training, we discovered, was under the army or civilian auxiliary command and only dogs with the proper communist political background at home could qualify.

Despite these drawbacks we were far better off than most foreign residents who had no contacts with the Russians, and who lived in drab flats or hotel rooms. We had a home of our own, furnished and equipped like an American house, with everything, including the kitchen sink and a small but attractive garden.

We could only guess as to why we suddenly had become the objects of so much organized interest. But the timing suggested that the Gubichev case might have had some bearing. The Soviets, who claimed diplomatic immunity for this Russian United Nations employee arrested for espionage, said plainly in print that reprisals might be expected against Americans in Moscow.

The number of candidates for such reprisals was uncomfortably small, and of these the correspondents were the likeliest.

The Gubichev case had provided a new and dangerous precedent. Whereas some American reporters had simply been shipped out of Russia, any future cases probably would

be held for trial as long as Gubichev, perhaps even longer. The Russians believe in precedents.

These were the implications that made our intensive shadowing seem especially sinister and speeded our departure. A strange climax for an assignment undertaken with the conviction that the world's future depends on understanding and friendship between the United States and Russia.

But I hold this conviction now more than ever!

"STALIN is the Lenin of today."

This recent formula, which Soviet editorial writers use with recurring frequency, sums up the postwar apotheosis of the Kremlin leader.

At one time, Stalin claimed to be no more than the humble apprentice of Lenin, the great revolutionary master. The very term "Stalinism" was coined as a derogatory epithet by political opponents.

Seldom in history has a man become a legend in his own lifetime. Yet Stalin the man already has been totally replaced by Stalin the legend where the Russian public is concerned.

The legendary Stalin is a mellow, uncle-like character, who lives to accept bouquets of flowers from little girls in token of thanks for their "happy childhood." He radiates gentle patience and benevolent wisdom.

All this bears little resemblance to the sharp, ruthless politician who gained control of the party machinery as Lenin's hand faltered and who, by a series of deft moves, not only consolidated his own position but outmaneuvered the entire group of Lenin's close associates, who finally were disposed of during the purges of 1934-38.

Chief cultivator of the Stalin legend is Stalin himself. His mode of life, his every public act of utterance, is calculated to fit this role. Having divorced himself largely from the everyday business of government, he descends from the Olympian remoteness of his semi-retirement only at rare

intervals to make history with a few well-chosen words, usually in the form of a press release.

Stalin has not made a public speech since February, 1946, when he addressed his constituents during the Supreme Soviet election campaign. From year to year, he lengthens his vacations at his Soci villa on the Black Sea.

Meanwhile, responsibility for running the state gravitates increasingly to Stalin's lieutenants, the members of the Politburo. This is the level at which the struggle for personal power takes place.

The order of ascendancy at a given time always can be ascertained from the alignment of portraits displayed on Soviet holidays. When Andrei A. Zhdanov was alive, Stalin, in the center, was flanked invariably by Viachislav M. Molotov on the right and Zhdanov on the left.

Next to Molotov came Georgi M. Malenkov and next to Zhdanov, Laurenty P. Beria, but at one time Beria was alongside Molotov.

The demise of Zhdanov disarranged the pattern and for a time Beria and Malenkov appeared to be running neck and neck, while Molotov continued to hold first place.

The race was so close that I recall how, during the November 7, 1947, festivities, the positions of Malenkov and Beria portraits were shifted twice in the course of a single day.

Within recent years, a major readjustment has occurred. Beria, a powerful figure by virtue of his control of the MVD and close personal relations with Stalin, does not appear to aspire to further advancement. Molotov, since he relinquished the foreign ministry, has gone into partial eclipse. Russians say that Molotov, even in his prime, was important

only as the appendage or reflection of Stalin and was never a personality in his own right. His present decline, they add, is simply the result of Stalin's increased retirement.

The rivalry between Zhdanov and Malenkov was long an open secret. It was a struggle between antithetical temperaments rather than opposing political views. Zhdanov was the brilliant intellectual, inclined to brashness, but with a keen instinct of leadership, the only spellbinder in the Politburo. His intense party zeal was flavored strongly with Russian nationalism. He was a man of considerable cultural background, thoroughly versed in Russian literature and with a rich command of his native language. He was, in addition, an accomplished amateur pianist. Like other Soviet leaders of his generation, his knowledge of the outside world was negligible.

Malenkov is the typical product of the party apparatus, in which he has spent his entire adult life. Lacking mass appeal, he dislikes the limelight and prefers to pull wires behind the scenes. Cautious where Zhdanov was impetuous, plodding where Zhdanov was brilliant, Malenkov has a brain closely akin to the vast party card index which he keeps as chief of the party organization. He thus occupies today much the same strategic post that Stalin held when Lenin was failing. He has the same talent for party-machine manipulation that stood Stalin in good stead in the days of the struggle for Lenin's mantle. Zhdanov, by comparison, had more of Trotsky's characteristics.

During the past year, Malenkov has used his position to carry out a quiet but thorough purge from key posts of Zhdanov's proteges and appointees, the most important of whom were Nikolai Voznesensky, member of the Politburo and chairman of the State Planning Commission, and

Alexander Kuznetsov, trade-union chairman, both products of Zhdanov's party organization.

While Zhdanov sometimes was inclined to overreach himself, as in the 1939 attack on Finland, the expulsion of Tito from the Cominform, and the Berlin blockade, Malenkov favors consolidation of present holdings before attempting further expansion. It would be utterly wrong to construe this as meaning a softer policy more "friendly" or conciliatory toward the West. There is nothing soft or "friendly" about Malenkov.

At home, Malenkov's consolidation policy has meant wholesale collectivization of the Balts, deportation of "unreliable" elements from border and coastal areas, and renewed discrimination against the Jews.

There has been no letup in the party indoctrination campaign in all spheres of learning and culture which Zhdanov initiated. Part of the Malenkov policy has been to intensify the anti-American campaign, to expend enormous efforts and resources on blacking out the Voice of America radiocasts in Russian.

Abroad, the Malenkov consolidation policy has meant tighter control of the Cominform countries, ruthless elimination of "Titoists," of all Communists with the slightest spirit of independence, universal and arbitrary imposition of the Soviet economic pattern, including collectivization of the peasantry and destruction of the middle classes, using the extrajudicial technique of the MVD, as well as the "model" trials with their self-accusations.

Malenkov's caution is reflected in the lifting of the Berlin blockade and in the fact that the campaign against Tito has so far stopped short of actual invasion. But such things are a matter of cold judgment and tactics and do not express

any genuine desire for friendship with the West, which Malenkov despises, just as Zhdanov did, and understands even less.

The emergence of Malenkov marks a major historic milestone. The party helm is passing into the hands of a generation of party members who have no clear personal recollections of the old order and who did not themselves take part in the Revolution.

Malenkov and his contemporaries reached maturity and have spent their entire active lives under the Soviet system and are its products, whereas the older Bolsheviks, including Stalin, were not. This profoundly affects their thinking and attitude.

The rise of Georgi Malenkov as chief aspirant to Prime Minister Joseph Stalin's mantle is not the only change recent years have brought within the bosom of the mighty Politburo.

The passing of Mikhail Kalinin in 1946 removed from the Politburo the sole surviving old-time Bolshevik and contemporary of Lenin other than Stalin himself. Of all the Kremlin figures, Kalinin had been the most human and accessible. To the end of his days the little, white-bearded peasant worker had remained a plain man of the people, the sole chink in the blank stone wall of the all-powerful police state.

As titular head of the Soviet government (chairman of the Præsidium of the Supreme Soviet), Kalinin was the one man to whom hundreds of thousands of citizens turned with their personal requests and grievances. He received many of them personally and answered the letters of legions of others. Many personal injustices were righted through his efforts.

I recall the case—shortly before World War II—of a former American woman of Russian origin who had returned to Russia and taken out Soviet citizenship. Later, for personal reasons, she decided she wanted to give up her Soviet citizenship and return to the United States.

Finally, after several years of fruitless battling with the visa authorities, she asked for and was granted an interview with Kalinin. Gruffly, he thumbed through her file.

"You were born in Russia. You didn't like it. You went to America?" he inquired.

"Yes," said the woman.

"You didn't like it in America. You came back to Russia?"

"Yes," the woman answered once again.

"You don't like it here. You want to go back to America?"

"Why, er—" began the woman, flustered by such abruptness.

"That is all," Kalinin broke in, "I shall see what can be done, citizeness."

Before the astonished visitor could utter thanks, she was whisked out. Ten days later, she got her exit visa.

While all the men on the Politburo are capable and devoted to the Communist cause, individual ability varies. Least brilliant of the lot, by general agreement, is Klementi Voroshilov, pre-war Commissar for Defense until Stalin took over. Today Voroshilov continues to fill a marshal's uniform, but he has no major responsibilities. During the purge, Voroshilov lost his closest assistants—Gamarnik, Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Yegorov, and a host of others, including much of the Soviet Army high command. The circumstance that he himself survived this holocaust as well as the discovery of serious gaps in Soviet preparedness in

the early weeks of the German invasion, is commonly attributed to Stalin's personal fondness for and loyalty to his old friend "Klim." The present minister of armed forces, who took over when Stalin gave up the post two years ago, is Nikolai Bulganin, product of the Moscow party organization.

L. Kaganovich continues to hold his place as the sole Jew in the Politburo and top party echelon. He is famed as the party's outstanding trouble shooter, who at various times has brought order out of chaos in agriculture, heavy industry and railways.

His management of the Soviet Union's overworked and inadequate transportation system in wartime was a brilliant contribution to victory. At various time Kaganovich's two younger brothers have held important posts. His sister reportedly is Stalin's present (third) wife.

Armenian Anastas Mikoyan also is a durable member of the inner circle, although no longer minister of foreign trade. A keen and enterprising businessman, in prewar times, as commissar of the food industry, Mikoyan was an enthusiastic convert to American methods. On his return from a trip to the United States he set up ice-cream factories and meat-packing plants with machinery purchased in America—and started a vigorous campaign to add tomato juice and hot dogs to the Russian diet. He even opened an automat restaurant and a cafeteria, both copied from American models.

Today such activities would have earned him disgrace and condemnation as a "cosmopolitan" and "slavish emulator of the decadent bourgeois West." But in those days Stalin himself liked to use America as an example from which his countrymen should learn.

Nikita Khrushchev has been Stalin's faithful if not brilliant proconsul in the Ukraine ever since the purge eliminated the previous Ukrainian party hierarchy. Nikolai Shvernik graduated into high politics from the trade-union bureaucracy, where he served for years as chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. He succeeded Kalinin as Chairman of the Præsidium of the Supreme Soviet—titular chief of state. But under his incumbency that office no longer is the clearing house for personal grievances it was under Kalinin. His chief duties are passing out government decorations and receiving heads of foreign missions.

Most colorless figure in the Politburo is easily Andrei Andreyevich Andreyev (known as Triple A), who has held innumerable posts without known distinction, who never writes or says anything for publication and is almost never mentioned in any connection, but whose photograph always turns up at the right place in time to dispel recurrent rumors of his disgrace.

Alexander Kosygin, like Voznesensky, is a product of Zhdanov's Leningrad party organization who was brought down to Moscow to work in the upper party echelon under Zhdanov's patronage. Because of this background, his future appears uncertain under the Malenkov ascendancy.

The names and faces of several additional younger men often are bracketed with those of the Politburo, as members of the upper party echelon.

Until recently, the outstanding member of this group was Mikhail Suslov, named chief of the party's Agitation and Propaganda Department when Zhdanov was in the saddle. Suslov, who had a distinguished record for underground party activity in the North Caucasus during the German

occupation, twice accompanied Zhdanov to meetings of the Cominform. His present status is not entirely clear.

Another member of this group is P. K. Ponomarenko, who, before he was called to Moscow, was secretary of the party in Byelorussia. He, too, had a distinguished war record as leader of partisan operations.

A third figure in the group is Georgi Popov, present head of the Moscow party organization and a strong Malenkov man, destined to go places with his patron.

All the men in this last group are, or were, designated as secretaries of the Central Committee, and it is from their number that vacancies in the Politburo—down to twelve from normal strength of fourteen—would logically be filled. Quite possibly new members already have been chosen without the event's being made public.

Lacking other sources, the Russian people long since have learned that the surest way of telling who is out or in is by the protracted absence of certain names and photographs from the press—as was the case with Voznesensky—and the repeated appearance of others—as with Ponomarenko.

But until the next party congress, the public at large will not be told officially just who the new top party leaders are.

II

RUBBER-STAMP PARLIAMENT, RUBBER-STAMP PARTY

I

“WE RUSSIANS,” a friend once remarked to me, “can claim one priority that nobody ever will challenge. We have invented the world’s dullest parliament.”

My friend was giving an average citizen’s opinion of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., defined by the Soviet Constitution as “the highest organ of state power of the U.S.S.R.”

The best indication of what the Kremlin bosses really think of their sovereign Parliament is the fact that the Supreme Soviet is the one government body whose proceedings are open to foreign correspondents and diplomats. In the Soviet Union this is a sure sign that no state matters of consequence are to be dealt with.

For a fortnight each year, usually in February or March, some one thousand, eight hundred Supreme Soviet deputies converge on Moscow from all corners of the country. They are a colorful crowd, central Asiatics and Caucasians in their native costumes, gilded marshals and generals with chestfuls of shiny medals.

In the Great Hall of the Kremlin, where the last Romanovs were crowned, they sit through endless speeches and vote when called on to do so. With punctilious adherence to parliamentary procedure, the chairman calls for a show

of those in favor—a forest of hands shoots up. Next he asks for those opposed. Not one hand is raised, and so the chairman announces: “*Nyet!*” Finally, he asks for the abstentions. Again not a single hand, and again the same announcement. The chairman then declares that the measure or law up for vote has been unanimously adopted and moves on to the next item.

The main business of every Supreme Soviet session is the adoption of the annual budget. Just how the budget happened to be chosen for these deliberations, or some other field of government activity, is a Kremlin secret. The Soviet Constitution, which sets forth the Supreme Soviet’s functions, says nothing about its concentrating on the budget.

Yet, for the better part of a week, after approving the agenda for the sessions, the delegates listen first to the draft of the budget presented by the minister of finance, next to speeches by various delegates proposing minor changes and amendments, and then to the final draft again presented by the finance minister, substantially the same as the initial draft, save that a few minor changes and recommendations have been incorporated.

The presentation of the draft is made at a joint session of both houses. This is when Prime Minister Joseph Stalin and the other members of the Politburo put in an appearance. They sit on a raised platform at the far end of the hall behind the speaker’s stand, in the shadow of a tall white marble Lenin.

After the first half hour or so, Stalin usually saunters out, and gradually the others follow suit. Thereafter, the “highest law-making organ in the land” continues its deliberations

without the party leaders, save that the marble Lenin is always there.

Just how much relation these deliberations have to the actual conduct of affairs is indicated by the circumstance that the budget for 1946 was not debated and approved until October, when the fiscal year was almost over.

Nor do the billions of rubles dealt with in the budget give much of a clue to the actual state of the country's economy, in view of the highly nebulous value of the ruble.

After the initial joint sitting, the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet hold their meetings separately. The finance minister submits his final draft, first to one chamber for approval, and then to the other, which means that he makes virtually the same speech three separate times.

Having passed the budget, in the last half hour of its final session, each chamber hears the reports of the Supreme Soviet Præsidium and of the Council of Ministers on ukases and decrees, appointments and dismissals during the time elapsed since the previous session.

This is as close as the Supreme Soviet ever gets to the actual substance of government. Everything is approved in rapid-fire succession.

Never has the Supreme Soviet let the Præsidium or the council down by vetoing any measure passed between sessions.

Only on one occasion in its history was the Supreme Soviet's unanimity record ruffled—and that was easily ironed out. Once when the agenda was up for approval at the opening meeting, a woman delegate raised her hand as "opposed." Then, to a flabbergasted assembly, she explained that she objected to a proposed meeting Sunday, and she

was sure other out-of-town delegates agreed with her, as this would prevent them from seeing the ballet "Swan Lake." The matter was arranged to suit her convenience, harmony was restored, and the agenda speedily approved—unanimously. But everyone present somehow felt a genuine blow for democracy had been struck.

Thereafter, the arrangements invariably have provided the delegates with plenty of time to look around and enjoy the sights and amenities of the Soviet capital. This was easy, since the two chambers, using the same hall, meet alternately. When not meeting, the delegates are out on the town. The best blocks of ballet and theater seats are reserved for them. Before rationing was abolished, they were provided with coupons to the best stores, serving high government and secret police officials. At present, they all have liberal expense allowances, in addition to free board at Moscow's three best hotels, and to free transport.

So eager is the Kremlin to confirm the impression that the Supreme Soviet, like the Soviet people whom they claim to represent, is just one big, happy family, that the least reference to serious difficulties or disagreements by some individual delegate is generally deleted from the stenogram. The Supreme Soviet in all respects faithfully images the one-party ballot system that elected it.

As for the Supreme Soviets of the R.S.F.S.R. (Russia proper), and other union republics, they simply approve budgets under the amounts assigned to each republic through the all-union budget. Their proceedings are correspondingly less eventful and shorter than those of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet.

The determination to keep all genuine debate out of the

Supreme Soviet may seem puzzling. Surely a little lively discussion, a bit of dissent, a clash of opinion even on non-essentials, would lend at least a semblance of plausibility to the performance.

As matters now stand, while the Supreme Soviet may serve to confirm fellow travelers abroad in the belief that the Soviet Union is a democracy, it impresses few thinking individuals inside the country. The disillusionment my friend voiced is extremely widespread. From the internal propaganda standpoint, the Supreme Soviet is something of a liability, since its threadbare, humorless parody of parliamentary forms serves as a constant reminder to the Russians of how unfree they are.

A likely answer is that here we are dealing with one of the Soviet inconsistencies. When the constitution establishing the present parliamentary system was written, Stalin and his assistants may well have honestly envisaged the gradual introduction of democratic features. The police state, however, operates and evolves according to an inner logic of its own, a logic that not even Stalin can alter. In a sense, not even he can control the Frankenstein he helped to fashion. And the police state eyes even the least hint of genuine freedom and democracy with abhorrence and dread.

NO ALL-UNION CONGRESS of the Sôviet Communist Party has been held since 1939, though party rules prescribe that these congresses must be called at least once every three years.

Technically, it could be argued, therefore, that the present party leadership's mandate expired more than eight years ago and that the Soviet leaders have been acting illegally ever since. To date, however, no party member has tried to raise the issue.

People in Russia have learned to attach no importance to such technicalities. I once pointed out to a Russian acquaintance that Article 46 of the Soviet Constitution provides that the Supreme Soviet (parliament) shall sit twice yearly, whereas in practice there usually is only one session a year, which promptly adjourns after approving the budget.

My friend was frankly surprised at my comment. "But think of the extra trouble and expense involved if they met twice yearly," he objected. "And besides, what on earth would they do?"

The All-Union party Congress is the supreme assemblage of the Communist party, with technical powers to shape or reshape party policy and select or reject party leadership. It elects the Central Committee which in turn elects the Politburo from among its own numbers, as well as the Orgburo, and the Central Committee secretaries. Technically, the Party Congress is free to change the top party leadership.

From any standpoint, it is high time for a party congress. Not only has the mandate of the present party leadership technically lapsed, the entire composition of the party rank and file has changed.

By 1939, as a result of the purges, party membership had shrunk from a prewar high of around three million to less than two million. Today, after mass induction of younger elements from the army as a wartime morale-building measure, the figure has soared to beyond five million.

The new members never have had an opportunity to vote for representatives to the higher party organs.

The major preliminaries to a party congress took place last winter, when local party congresses were held in the regions, territories, autonomous and union republics.

According to the theory of "democratic centralism," the lower level elects its representatives to the next higher level, and so forth, the source of authority being the rank-and-file membership at the base of the pyramid.

In current Soviet practice, it works exactly the other way around. Authority emanates from the Politburo at the peak and is delegated downward. The lower party levels simply carry out directives from above.

Under this dispensation, initiative and originality are not encouraged within the party apparatus. Party members are judged by the readiness with which they obey or transmit orders from above. The result is an amazing uniformity, not only of policy, but even of thought and verbal expression.

This was strikingly apparent in the reports of the party secretaries to the local party congresses. Though delivered

in different languages and in widely separated areas, they all sounded as though written by the same hand.

On January 25, 1949, in Kiev, Nikita Khrushchev, in his capacity of secretary of the Ukrainian Communist party (he also is a member of the Politburo), began his report to the local party congress as follows:

"Comrades: Since the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist party of the Ukraine, more than eight and a half years have elapsed. This period was replete with events of world-wide historic importance."

Khrushchev spoke in Ukrainian. That very same afternoon, more than a thousand miles away in Tbilisi, Secretary Charkviani of the Georgian Communist party was telling delegates to the Georgian party Congress:

"Comrades: Since the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Georgia, nearly nine years have elapsed—a period replete with the greatest historic events."

Simultaneously, in Baku, Secretary Bagirov told the Azerbaijan party Congress: "Comrades! Since the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist party of Azerbaijan, almost nine years have elapsed. During those years, extremely important events took place."

Some days later, on February 10, Party Secretary Bogolyubov told the Kirghizian party Congress: "Comrades: Since the Sixth Congress of the Communist party of Kirghizia, almost nine years have elapsed. This was a period replete with the greatest worldwide historic events."

So on down the party line ad infinitum. Allowing for differences in local problems, much the same uniformity prevailed throughout the proceedings of all the local party congresses. Identical uncomplimentary remarks were every-

where passed about the West. Identical flattering references were made to Stalin, followed by time out for "thunderous applause."

There are good indications that the Kremlin would like to impose a similar uniformity and unanimity on the one hundred and ninety-five million non-party members of motley peoples under its rule.

One significant thread running through every local congress was a new stress on the close ties between the non-Russian nationalities of each republic and the great Russian people, everywhere exalted as the universal standard-bearers of civilization.

Uzbekistan Party Secretary Yusupov (himself Russian) even dug up a quotation from Friedrich Engels, dated 1851, lauding Russia's role in the Orient as "progressive." At the same time, Yusupov sternly warned against any notion that the close similarity between the Uzbek and Turkish languages signified any cultural or historic kinship. This, he said, was "pan-Turkism," which was anti-Marxist, and a tool of Anglo-American imperialism.

Azerbaijan Party Secretary Bagirov urged all Azerbaijanians to master Russian, "the language of our big brother, the native tongue of our multi-millioned, multi-national Soviet family." He illustrated his argument with a quotation from a local nineteenth century poet:

My son, know you Russian science

Master you that language.

We need them. Without them the world is dark.

Without this learning, there's no road to light.

The secretary of the Kazakstan Party told his congress that all textbooks on the history of Kazakstan were being

rewritten, since, he said, the authors had wrongly pictured Kazak history as a long struggle for independence and had failed to deal adequately with the historic and economic ties between the Kazaks and the Russians.

It follows that the Kremlin would much prefer that the Kazaks and other members of the Soviet family concentrate on learning Russian, "the language of our big brother," rather than studying the history of their own struggles for independence from Russia. Stalin himself has always stressed that knowledge is a guide to action.

3

IN THE February, 1948, elections to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R. (Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic), the voters of the Stalin district in the city of Moscow piled up an all-time election record. It was officially announced that one hundred per cent of the electorate had gone to the polls, and that every one of them had voted for Comrade Stalin, who always runs in the Stalin district.

In Moscow's Molotov district, where by happy coincidence Viachislav M. Molotov was running, the voters gave their choice a similar thumping endorsement; other members of the Politburo in their respective districts followed close behind, 99 per cent, 99.8 per cent, and so on, neatly graduated in decimals according to order of importance.

In fostering the form—if not the substance—of democ-

racy, Soviet Russia is probably the votingest country in the world. Never a winter passes without an election to one of the innumerable elective government bodies—the various supreme soviets, the regional, city and district soviets—the jurors and judges of the People's Courts.

Whatever the choice of bodies, there never is a choice of candidates, only the single party ticket, or, as the Soviet press likes to call it, "the ticket of the bloc of party and non-party Bolsheviks." In Russian the word for "choice" and "election" is one and the same, and what it boils down to is choice without choice.

Voting for the ticket merely requires folding the ballot and dropping it into the urn.

Voting against the ticket, however, means crossing out the name or names on the printed form. To do that the voter would have to use one of the little curtained booths provided at every polling place.

It is easy to see why practically everybody shuns the booths and prefers to stick to the simpler procedure of dropping the ballot unaltered and in full view of the election officials.

Once, when a group of United States correspondents toured a polling place during elections, a gray-haired citizen asked us, with just the trace of a smile: "Where else do they have elections like these?"

The actual vote in a Soviet election is but the culmination of a long and complex process. Even though there are no opposition tickets and the Communist party has the field to itself, everyone goes through the motions of an intensive campaign, in which the press and radio take full part.

First, nominating meetings are called, usually under the joint sponsorship of the trade-union and party locals, at which candidates are proposed and seconded. And regardless of how many separate meetings are held in a single district, so well does the party apparatus function that never is there any conflict or discrepancy in the list of nominees.

Then comes a continuous round of election rallies where hundreds of speakers sing the praises of the Soviet state, the Communist party and the Soviet electoral system, and take pot shots at the outside world.

Besides mass rallies, there are numberless factory and neighborhood meetings. Moreover, every city block has its *agitpunkt* (literally, agitation point), whither individual voters may repair and hear the same things personally from party propagandists—"agitators." Even the stay-at-homes are sure to be visited at least once, and possibly several times, by mobile *agit*-brigades and propagandists who make door-to-door rounds.

The election campaigns thus provide the authorities with a splendid pretext for checking up on any unauthorized residents.

We, too, as householders, were not immune from these annual electioneering visitations.

The agitator would ring the doorbell and ask if this was where Citizeness Fitterer lived. After a moment we realized he was referring to our Adelina, our Crimean Volksdeutsche cook, the only name from our address on the voters' list.

We would direct our caller to the kitchen, where for about a quarter of an hour he would agitate Adelina on the advantages of being a Soviet citizen, warmed by the sun of the Stalin Constitution and able to take part in the coming elections.

Sometimes, when he got through with Adelina, the agitator, new to the district, would start working on us, unaware that we were not Soviet citizens and therefore unable to vote in the impending elections. When we explained this to him, he would himself become agitated, mumble an apology, and make a beeline for the exit.

On election morning, a member of the block committee would come around to make sure Adelina was going to the polls.

Election time was the only time Adelina's government ever remembered her existence—that is, until one day I had a phone call from the Foreign Ministry.

A voice on the other end inquired: "Does a certain Citizeness Fitterer work for you?"

"Yes," I replied. "She is our cook."

"I am sorry," said the voice, "but I must request that you discharge her immediately; she is not authorized to work for foreigners."

Efforts to get this ruling rescinded availed naught. As a person of German "nationality" (in Russian usage the term denotes ethnic origin, not citizenship), Adelina was on the MVD's unreliable list, even though her family had lived in Russia for generations.

Her sole surviving relatives, a sister and brother-in-law, had long since been "transferred" to Kazakstan. Adelina had been spared because she had been working at Spaso House. But then she left and came to work for us, and after a while the MVD caught up with her. The hardest job of all was breaking the news to Adelina herself.

"Where shall I go, what shall I do?" she kept sobbing over and over, addressing her questions to no one in particular.

We offered to let her stay on in the house until she found another place, but she insisted on getting out the next day. She had a friend who could shelter her in a corner temporarily. She would look for employment with a Russian family.

We ran into her some months later; she was still looking. Each time she applied for a job everything went fine until the people learned she had been working for foreigners, whereupon she would be discharged. Now she was thinking of joining her relatives. We never saw her again.

But I sometimes wonder where Adelina is and if around election time they still remember to tell her about the benefits of Soviet "democracy" and see that she votes.

III

THE SOVIET ELITE

A SUDDEN hush has settled on Moscow's busy Arbat Street. The sleek asphalt roadway, emptied of its traffic, threads between two lines of white-uniformed, white-gloved police spaced at ten-meter intervals along either curb.

The police are on tenterhooks, their eyes strained toward the far end of the street. One of them darts out, bodily lifts up an old peasant woman who has strayed into the road, and deposits her back on the sidewalk. The tension rises to its climax.

With a sudden swoosh a shiny black sedan flashes down the fairway, then an open car full of bodyguards follows in close pursuit. The tension is over in a trice, and the Arbat returns to noisy normal.

Bystanders exchange knowing nods: "*Hozyain proyekhal*" (There went the boss).

But the black sedan was curtained too heavily and went by too fast for anyone to identify the rear-seat passengers. And the bosses who thus speed between their offices and *dachas* (country houses) twice daily during the summer are not one but numerous.

In a matter of minutes they are rolling along the smooth Uspenskoye Chaussee highway through charming country. It is like an enchanted land out of a Russian fairy tale. The log-built peasant *izbas* (cottages) are trim, with brightly

painted roofs and pretty flowerbeds behind neat fences. The borders of the highway are carefully landscaped and even the side roads are tarmacked. Immaculate policemen, just like those along the Arbat, stand at every intersection.

The *dachas*, too, have an air of enchantment. White walls and shining gabled roofs glisten through the dark evergreen foliage along the side of the Moskva River, and woe to the mere mortal who treads too nigh these magic dwellings. Without the proper MVD (secret police) credentials, he will land himself in major trouble.

Once, while out for a drive the summer before last, we took a wrong turn and ended up at a tall green gate. There was nobody in sight, but realizing our mistake, we made a quick turnabout.

A figure in an MVD blue cap suddenly materialized from the bushes, waving his arms, red-faced and furious. As I pulled up, he demanded to know where we were going. Having heard our explanation and apparently impressed by our car, he warned, "Don't let me ever see you around here again."

This whole area along the Moskva River west of the capital is officially designated as the "Forbidden Zone." Only persons with special MVD clearance may reside there—and no foreigners, under any circumstances!

Last year, we still could drive along the main roads, and the diplomatic corps often picnicked and bathed in the area. Now, however, all foreign cars are turned back at the city limits.

Many of the Soviet great and near-great, from Prime Minister Joseph Stalin down, have their *dachas* in the Forbidden Zone. Besides top government and party chiefs, cabinet ministers, and leaders of the armed services, they in-

clude factory directors, members of the Academy of Sciences, prominent authors, artists, and stage celebrities.

These privileged groups comprise the cream of Soviet society. Not that the Russians have even a remote counterpart of Western social life. There are no country clubs in the Forbidden Zone. Neighbors seldom call—in fact, they usually do not even know one another unless their work brings them into contact.

There are two main factors tending to discourage free social conduct within Soviet high officialdom. The first is fear. Such contact is frowned on by the ever-suspicious, ever-vigilant MVD. Moreover, personal friends are potentially dangerous. If they know too much, they may denounce you—or if they get into trouble, your ties with them may incriminate you. During the great purges many persons were undone by their private relationships. A prudent Russian today hesitates to confide in even his wife too fully.

The second factor that circumscribes the cultural as well as the social life of the high Soviet official is work. Few persons work harder and longer hours than those in responsible Soviet positions. The average workday of a Soviet official begins around eleven o'clock in the morning when, after a hasty breakfast, he heads for his office. There he works through steadily until after midnight, with brief time out at four and again at nine o'clock for a bite in the buffet or dining room.

"Reception hours" in most government offices and ministries run from eleven at night until one in the morning, and during this time the official must be on deck just in case the Kremlin telephones or one of his superiors drops by with a query. He gets home about two in the morning, when his faithful wife has dinner ready—and so to bed.

After a week of this routine, when Sunday rolls around, rare is the husband with strength or inclination for anything beyond a brief round of shopping. Nor does the wife of such a Soviet functionary have much independent existence of her own. With rare exceptions, such as Mme. Molotov, wife of M. Molotov, and twice a commissar in her own right under her maiden name, the ordinary Soviet official's wife is not a career woman. Though she be married to a member of the mighty Politburo, the public probably has never seen her picture or even her name in print. The Soviet press does not go in for either society or gossip columns.

The official's wife goes to the ballet, the theater, or a concert only on those rare occasions when her husband can get off to escort her, though she may take in a motion picture from time to time unescorted.

Ordinarily, the Soviet official's *dacha*, town flat, and his automobile all go with his job, so if demoted or dismissed he stands to lose much. At the same time, the charges he pays for these facilities are almost nominal. His salary, with allowances, may range up to 8000 or 10,000 rubles monthly (about \$2000).

Academy members, who are in a class by themselves, draw a total of 25,000 rubles a month (about \$6,250). In addition, their regular incomes are supplemented from time to time by cash bonuses, especially in the case of factory directors.

Such is life among the upper Soviet official and managerial classes at or near the apex of the Soviet social pyramid.

Essentially, they belong to the same social category and live by the same book of party rules. For leading citizens

of a revolutionary new society, their behavior patterns are surprisingly conservative and conventional. Indeed, they are more restricted and inhibited than their counterparts in Western "bourgeois" countries.

The most pampered group in Soviet society consists of the leading lights in "art"—in Russia, a generic term that covers letters, music, stage, and screen, as well as the graphic arts.

Successful authors, musicians, painters, and, pre-eminently playwrights and theatrical celebrities, enjoy a degree of personal liberty and exemption from restraint far beyond any other category. Unlike the official and managerial class, they may mingle socially with their own kind and with others—foreigners now excepted.

This is partly because their work is not of a confidential nature and involves no knowledge of state secrets. Furthermore, social contacts are considered a legitimate and essential part of their creative endeavors.

The impact of party ideology on the country's intellectual and cultural life will be dealt with separately. For the present purposes of economic and social comparison, it is enough to point out that even under the present doctrinaire compulsions on his work the artist is freer than the state official. Provided he has a keen nose for the Communist party line, he need have few qualms for the future. And there are no limits to the earning opportunities of the Soviet author or composer who writes what the party wants.

Constantine Simonov, most affluent and prolific of the post-war authors, usually has several plays running simultaneously in hundreds of theaters all over the Soviet Union, and he is entitled to royalties on each performance. To simplify bookkeeping, the government now has given Simonov an "open back account." This means he can draw any

amount whenever he wishes. This makes him one of the first individuals to practice the principle of full-fledged communism: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.

Reportedly, Simonov finds that this arrangement rather cramps his style, since he is more reticent now about drawing large sums than when he had a definite amount credited to his balance.

The artist also is in a better position to accumulate tangible wealth. He may purchase or build his own *dacha*, designed and decorated to his own taste. This has obvious advantages in case one encounters reverses. Thus the humorist Zoschenko, when he fell from grace in 1946, retired to his *dacha* near Leningrad and quietly raised poultry.

The artist likewise may acquire a city flat of his own in one of the writers' or artists' co-operatives. He also can have a private car of his own.

Simonov has a Cadillac, Ehrenburg a Buick, as befits their respective stations. Nor is this preference regarded as inconsistent with the party line. After all, Stalin still rides in a Packard in preference to a ZIS.

It is a nose dive from the exalted status of the leading artists to the level of less successful but aspiring colleagues. Economically, the latter merge with the general mass of the Soviet intelligentsia—the professors, doctors, lawyers, technicians, heads of departments, lesser functionaries and skilled workers who comprise the middle class of Soviet urban society.

These are the people who earn from 1000 to 3000 rubles (\$250 to \$750) a month, plus occasional bonuses. They are well housed by Soviet standards, with one or two rooms for

themselves and family, have three square meals a day, are adequately clothed, and can still afford theater tickets three or four times a month. They work a regular eight-hour day and make the most of their leisure time.

In summer, if they are fortunate, they may obtain a *dacha* at low rental from the organization employing them. Otherwise, they can rent a room in a peasant *izba* in a village near Moscow. Lacking automobile transportation, the majority park their families in the country for the summer and go out by train for week ends, taking with them food supplies and kerosene.

Immediately below in the social scale come the white-collar office employees and industrial workers. After the various deductions for state loan subscriptions, trade-union dues, insurance, and such, the cash income in this category is somewhere between 1000 and 500 rubles (\$250 and \$125) a month. A majority of wives, as well as husbands, work, less because they want to take advantage of equal opportunities for women than because one pay envelope is not enough to make ends meet.

Persons at this level get enough to eat, though the diet is a bit unbalanced and monotonous, with too much bread and potatoes and not much meat and fruit. Most of the earnings, in fact, go for food, especially when there are children, on a rather elementary hand-to-mouth basis. Clothing is a constant, acute problem, and seldom is there money left over for incidentals or even for things which in Western countries are looked on as essentials.

Not many families in this category—which comprises the overwhelming majority of the Soviet urban population—can, at present writing, boast even a small set of matching

dishes or cutlery. If a relative or friend drops in for dinner, more often than not an extra plate, cup, knife, fork, and spoon must be borrowed from the neighbors.

Such lack of household equipment is largely an aftermath of the war, when most persons were shunted about and things got lost or broken in the process. The condition of the white-collar and factory worker has improved markedly in the two years since the currency reform.

Though housing conditions still are bad for many workers, with entire families crowded into single rooms, relief is in prospect. Moreover, the Soviet employee or worker pays far less out of his earnings for rent, heat, light, and other communal services than does the wage earner in Western countries.

The Soviet urban middle class and working class, which are closely interrelated, not only comprise the base of the social pyramid, but are the mainstay of the political structure. Most of them feel they have a stake in the Soviet system and it commands their loyalty. These groups serve as the Communist party's chief recruiting ground.

The lowest layer of Soviet city population consists of a motley assortment of "unorganized" humanity, largely unskilled labor, with a high percentage of women. In summer, they work on construction jobs, road repair, or ditch digging. In winter, they clear snow. Most of them are newly arrived from the country. In time, many move on to better regular employment.

There are also speculators, criminal elements, and others with no visible roots or means of support. Still, by comparison with the West—though no statistics are available—there appears to be less organized crime in the Soviet Union.

IV

THE PLIGHT OF THE PEASANT

EVER SINCE her husband went off to war, never to return, "Auntie" Dasha's whole economy revolved around her cow. Each morning at four she milked the patient animal, trudged two miles to the railway station with her two cans of milk, and caught the five-forty.

Arriving in Moscow at six-fifteen, she delivered by street-car to her five steady customers, caught the seven-fifteen back from town, hurried home with her empty cans, helped herself to some boiled-potato mash from a big, black pot on the cold stove, and after hasty instructions to son Grisha, aged eight, was out of the house in time to report at nine o'clock for the day's field work on the collective farm.

At one o'clock Auntie Dasha came home, lit the samovar, built just enough fire in the stove to warm the pot. After that, she and Grisha had their main meal of the day, consisting of warmed-up boiled-potato mash and generous chunks of black rye bread, washed down with "tea" brewed from dried raspberry leaves.

By three o'clock she was back in the field, where she worked until six, getting home just as the cows, back from grazing, ambled through the village, mooing lustily, while the little cowherd brought up the rear, cracking his long rope whip.

Each cow, including Auntie Dasha's, turned in at its own yard without prompting. While the cow waited for her

in the shed, Auntie Dasha went off to inspect her large potato patch, just to check up on Grisha's hoeing. When Sunday came, she would tend it herself. After the evening milking, followed by a supper of cold potato mash and black bread, Auntie Dasha would sit down to do her sums. She could neither read nor write, but necessity had taught her figures.

Laboriously, she multiplied the day's yield of milk in liters by the day's market price in rubles. Next she subtracted her train fare, then her streetcar fare, then the cost of a kilo of black bread and any incidental purchases, such as matches, a candle, or some salt. She checked the remainder against the cash knotted in her kerchief before she deposited it in her mattress.

With the market price of milk fluctuating seasonally between three and seven rubles (60 cents to \$1.40) a quart and her cow giving about three hundred quarts a year, Auntie Dasha grossed around thirty-five hundred rubles (\$760) a year. She spent about five hundred rubles (\$100) on black bread (at one ruble 75 kopecks a kilo), and other incidentals. Transportation, with the new fare increases, added up to more than six hundred rubles (\$120). This left a balance of something under twenty-seven hundred rubles (\$540).

At this point, the figuring became more involved. As the owner of a private cow and with half a hectare of land for her private use, Auntie Dasha had obligations to the state. She had a state delivery quota of thirty kilos of butter a year, but in lieu of butter she was permitted to pay a cash equivalent of fifteen hundred rubles (\$300). Though she kept no chickens, she had an annual delivery quota of

five hundred eggs. In place of these, she paid a cash equivalent of five hundred rubles.

After meeting all these obligations last year, she still had more than six hundred rubles left with which to buy fodder for the winter.

Auntie Dasha met her remaining obligations to the state in kind. She filled her meat quota by slaughtering the calf which her cow bore regularly each January. Her private potato patch yielded her six hundred kilograms of potatoes. After delivering her quota of three hundred kilos to the state, this left her with three hundred kilos, which was just enough to take care of herself and Grisha through the coming year.

In the fall, she received a load of hay and a large bag of turnips from the collective farm as payment for her work-days. The collective farm chairman, whose house had a new tin roof, had explained at a members' meeting just why that year the collective farm was in no position to pay off in grain or cash.

But his arithmetic was way over Auntie Dasha's head, and anyway she was thankful for the hay.

All in all, it had been a fairly good year. She had rented the front part of her *izba* to my family for the summer for eight hundred rubles. Even after paying the fifty per cent tax on "unearned" revenue, this would give her money for shoes for the winter.

That was in 1948. When we saw Auntie Dasha again, she had just been notified that under the newly decreed scale, all her delivery quotas had been raised. Sadly, she had about decided to sell the cow and buy chickens with the proceeds. She still would have to fill her egg, meat, and

potato quotas, but with no cow her butter quota would be cut. With no calf to slaughter, she would discharge her meat quota with cash. But with fresh eggs bringing as high as fifteen or even sixteen rubles (about \$3) for ten on the open market, she thought she still might do better if she shifted from a dairy to a poultry economy.

Trotsky once loftily described the peasant as the pack animal of civilization. He wanted to express his appreciation of the peasant's economic role, plus his contempt for the docility with which the peasant allowed himself to be exploited under the old regime.

Since then the whole structure of society has been transformed. But the new regime has evolved techniques for squeezing the peasant far more thoroughly than those of the old-time landlords. Save in certain pampered areas, like the Georgian citrus groves or the rich wheatlands of the Kuban Cossack country, the peasant has yet to reap most of the benefits enjoyed by the urban intellectual and working classes.

The money the peasantry collected from high food prices in wartime was canceled by the currency reform. Their obligations to the state in kind and money have been upped from year to year. Consumer goods, abundant in the cities, have yet to reach most rural areas, and prices to the peasant are higher.

It is hard to generalize about living standards of the peasantry in such an enormous country. Conditions vary with the texture of the soil and the resourcefulness of the people. Economic changes, too, including changes for the better, can take place in the Soviet Union with dramatic suddenness.

One day the government may unexpectedly relax the pressure on the peasantry. Till then, there will be millions of Auntie Dashas pondering whether to trade their cows for chickens or vice versa.

V

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO SHOP IN MOSCOW

THE WOMEN's galoshes department in Moscow's mammoth "Mostorg" store was the scene of scrimmage. Women of all ages and condition, with a sprinkling of men sandwiched in among them, were battling, shoving, and pushing their way toward the counter with a courage and determination worthy of a noble cause. Outside, the police had roped off the entrance and were admitting new customers only one at a time from a line that curled twice round the block.

The time was late December, 1947, yet the sudden run on galoshes had nothing to do with the weather. The currency reform and the end of rationing had just been decreed. Old rubles were being converted at the rate of 10 to 1. But the price of women's galoshes had just been slashed 90 per cent, from 1400 rubles (\$264) to 140 rubles (26.40). Those who could put their money into galoshes, therefore, had the pleasant sensation of somehow beating devaluation.

The run on galoshes continued for a week. Then the authorities stepped in. There was a round-up of speculators who were marketing galoshes in the provinces at several times the legal price. The sale of galoshes in all stores was suspended temporarily.

Contrary to general expectations, when the galoshes counters reopened a few days later, the price had not been raised.

Stocks were maintained despite a renewed buying rush, which soon subsided. The government had won an important round in its campaign to establish consumer confidence in its new price policy.

From that time on there have been several cuts in retail prices. The reductions have been more marked in certain lines than in others. On the whole, foodstuffs have been most affected; also certain high-priced non-essentials, such as radios, cameras and motorcycles.

Reductions in food prices range from 10 to 15 per cent and on some of the other items mentioned as high as 30 per cent. Clothing prices, too, have come down somewhat, though here the drop has been less marked compared with the original price lists published at the end of rationing. At the same time there has been a steady improvement in stocks and selections, and the results are most noticeable in the appearance of a Moscow city crowd, the women especially.

While domestic production of consumer goods is expanding steadily, much of the present variety is provided by imported goods—Czechoslovak first and foremost. Moscow stores offer a wide choice of attractive Czech one- and two-piece printed dresses, ranging in price around 350 rubles (about \$70). Cotton blouses, produced locally, cost from 60 rubles (\$11.30) up. Rayon stockings range from 35 rubles (\$6.80) to 70 rubles (\$13.60) a pair. Nylons are not yet on public sale.

Ready-made suits for men start at about 600 rubles (\$113), ranging up to 2000 rubles (\$377). Men's shirts begin at 60 rubles (\$11.30). Leather shoes retail for from 250 rubles (\$47.10) to 400 rubles (\$75.40), but canvas slippers may be had for 50 rubles (\$9.40) a pair.

Besides clothing and footwear, Czechoslovakia also is the

source of a wide range of notions and accessories, including handbags, gloves, belts, and brief cases. In fact, I have heard Czech visitors to Russia remark wryly there were more Czech goods available in Moscow than in Prague.

The Soviet authorities are aware of such sensitiveness, and when Czech "cultural" groups visit Moscow, members of Soviet groups entertaining them invariably are cautioned not to wear easily recognizable Czech articles. Polish and German textiles are abundant, though to-date these sources have supplied less in the way of finished clothing.

A Soviet-made electric vacuum cleaner with all the appliances is on sale for 1200 rubles (\$226); also two sizes of Soviet electric refrigerators, at the equivalent of \$565 and \$1360, respectively.

But as far as most customers are concerned, these are just showroom samples of better days to come when they will have the space and place to use such things as well as the purchase price. You cannot set up a bulky refrigerator in a cramped communal kitchen or do much with a vacuum cleaner on two square yards of rug space in one room.

Similar considerations restrict the demand for radio consoles with built-in record players at ruble prices that would amount to \$1360 to \$1880. But a wide selection of table radios of Soviet, Czech and German makes, ranging in price from \$47.10 for a one-wave set to \$339 for a Telefunken, attracts plenty of trade.

Bicycles of many makes and designs are to be had for from \$136 up to \$377; also motorcycles, beginning at \$680. A four-cylinder Soviet-made Moskvich midget car, modeled on the German Opel Olympia, may be had for \$1700, or the medium-sized Pobeda for \$3400.

This abundance is a far cry from the empty shelves of the first post-war years, when amidst the prevailing drabness, the wives of ranking Red Army officers paraded in trophy German finery, including floppy, broad-brimmed hats atop peroxide hairdos. In those days, Moscow's favorite jokes invariably were at the expense of the overdressed wives of the generals.

Today, such figures have disappeared. The Russian woman's innate good taste and artistic sense gradually have been asserted, sometimes in the face of official opposition. So it happened with the "New Look." The hemline began to lengthen despite the party line, which condemned the whole thing as just another example of bourgeois decadence and wastefulness. Today, no well-dressed Moscow woman would be seen in anything more than fourteen and a half inches off the floor. And whereas today in the West, skirt lengths are again on the upgrade, in Moscow the downward trend continues.

Besides the cheaper clothing available to the average citizen, the best is now to be had in Moscow—at a price. For those who can afford to have their clothing made to order, the stores carry the finest worsteds, suitings, and gabardines at prices ranging from about \$55 a yard up.

For a country which supplies furs to the entire world, the price of fur coats in Russia is high. Even a second-hand Persian lamb or squirrel coat costs at least the equivalent of \$1000. New fur coats cost two or three times as much. Many of the coats on sale in Moscow were made up abroad. A prime favorite with Moscow women is a dyed fur called Canadian seal, which sells for 18,000 rubles (\$3400).

Top prices are paid cheerfully by the higher-income

groups, for Russians prize quality. Moreover, whatever the Russian earns he usually spends. In a country where there are no invested fortunes, money no longer is regarded as more than a medium of exchange.

VI

HOW MUCH GRAFT IN RUSSIAN BUSINESS?

WHEN MANY other contacts with Soviet life were lost to us foreigners, we might still mingle on terms of anonymous familiarity with the common people at the market. And marketing became one of the most interesting parts of our Moscow routine.

Muscovite housewives are fond of saying, with typical Russian overstatement, that you can even find birds' milk (Russian counterpart of hens' teeth) in the local market-places if only you keep on looking long enough. It is quite true that Moscow's markets offer an endless variety of wares and human experience.

At one stall a swarthy Caucasian in a broad-crowned chinchilla hat invariably presides over a mixed suitcase cargo of oranges, lemons and bay leaves. The oranges are sorted according to size in two piles. The larger ones sell for fifteen rubles apiece, the smaller ones for ten rubles. The lemons cost eight rubles each and the bay leaves one ruble for a bunch of three or four leaves.

To customers who protest his prices, the seller explains in heavily accented Russian that he has to pay his round-trip train fare and that all he could bring was what he could stow in a couple of suitcases. Russians like oranges and lemons, and bay leaves are essential ingredients for any

s'chee or borsch worthy of the name. (S'chee is cabbage soup with all kinds of vegetables and herbs mixed in, and topped with sour cream. Borsch is a consomme soup with beets and sour cream.)

So the customers buy one orange or lemon and one bunch of bay leaves per head, though they grumble that soon the same items will be available in government shops for a mere fraction of the price.

Oranges, lemons, and bay leaves are not the only items that fluctuate violently in price according to season. When the first pale-green hothouse gherkin-sized cucumbers appear in government shops late in February, they cost two rubles apiece. Presently, the price drops to one ruble. By June, the open market is glutted with ripe field cucumbers at three rubles a kilogram.

Early in the summer, peasants with their own produce to sell got five and even six rubles a kilo for new potatoes. Then the government stepped in with whole truckloads selling for one ruble a kilo. The price of tomatoes plummeted from twenty-five rubles a kilo at the start of the season to three rubles and fifty kopecks by the end of July, when they were available in government stores. In the same period, fresh cabbage dropped from eight rubles to two rubles a kilo.

The law of supply and demand thus continues to operate in the Soviet open market, much as under a free economy, but within a framework determined by the government.

After a long fruit-less and vegetable-less winter, the abundance and variety of berries, fruits and vegetables in Moscow markets the summer of 1949 was a joy to behold. The stalls sagged beneath the weight of wild and cultivated strawberries, cherries, raspberries, blueberries, currants, gooseberries, and mushrooms.

The government stores displayed melons and grapes shipped from Central Asia, blue plums and apricots from the Ukraine. Viewing its profusion, one appreciative customer remarked that Moscow indeed was the bride of all the Russias. However, we saw much the same picture in Leningrad and the few other places we were allowed to visit.

Meat also was abundant in the market. Good cuts of beef at thirty-two rubles a kilo, lamb at thirty-five rubles, pork at forty-two rubles. Veal sold for as little as eighteen rubles a kilo. But the quality of the meat varied greatly and ability to pick and choose was essential. All these prices were from ten to fifteen per cent lower than the year before.

In addition to its many produce markets, Moscow has other specialized markets, like the Yaroslavsky, where persons congregate to buy and sell second-hand clothes, and where it is considered inadvisable to be seen too often as the crowd is well sprinkled with plain-clothes agents of the anti-speculation squad.

The Dubininsky is a mart for everything conceivable in the way of hardware and machinery, from screw drivers, monkey wrenches and radio tubes to second-hand automobiles.

But for us, and for the children especially, most fascinating of all was the Bird Market, also called the Cow Market. There, once a week, on Sundays only, every extant form of animal life^o is bought and sold, from cattle and horses to turtles and parakeets. The range includes dogs of every breed and combination, few of them pedigreed; kittens, piglets, fox cubs, wolf cubs, porcupines, rabbits, squirrels, white mice, caged songbirds, and aquarium fish.

There, on a Sunday, congregates the whole guild of dedi-

cated fish fanciers, who have been breeding fancy fish in glass jars in Moscow flats many decades, uninterrupted by wars and revolutions. Some of the rare and exotic tropical varieties sell for as high as one hundred and fifty rubles a pair. But none of the fish fanciers made fortunes or even a living out of the hobby. On weekdays they worked as bookkeepers or clerks in some stuffy office.

Yet, every Sunday, rain or shine, they rendezvous at the same outdoor stalls. In below-zero winter weather they carried their containers well wrapped in woolen blankets and set them on little kerosene burners to prevent freezing. One man had small jars fitted into specially constructed pockets in the lining of his overcoat.

Aquarium fish prices also were directed by the government, through several state pet shops which were steadily encroaching on the sales of private fish fanciers. Present government policy in every sphere where some private trade survives is to maintain prices at the point where the private seller can barely break even. When the times comes, government prices all along the line will be cut below this marginal level for the purpose of pushing to the wall the last vestiges of private trade and, with them, liquidating the open market.

This intention also is apparent from the government's taxation policy, which tends to make it more and more difficult for the collectivized peasantry to keep even their own cow or potato patch. The time seems not far distant when the open market, most ancient of Russian institutions, will pass into history.

Even today, it is possible, though less interesting, to do all one's shopping in the government stores. Of these, by far the finest are the big model Gastronom stores that exist

now in every major city. Moscow's palatial Gastronom No. 1, commonly called "Yeliseyev's" after the former proprietor, displays varieties of smoked sausage, salami, smoked meats, meat loaf, smoked and salted fish, game, fowl, fancy breads, and pastry, not to mention ten or twelve varieties of caviar, scarcely equaled by the finest New York caterer. The Leningrad Gastronom is equally impressive.

It is a steep drop from the level of these luxury stores to that of the neighborhood shops where most of the people trade. However, a pattern for the future has been set. Prices on such items as sausage range between fifty and ninety rubles a kilo, on the smoked fish between forty and eighty rubles, fowl and game between twenty and twenty-five rubles. The best grades of bread cost five rubles a kilo, cake costs upward of twenty rubles a kilo. The best grades of caviar cost two hundred and thirty rubles a kilo, and the Gastronom stocks only the best of everything.

The shortcomings of Soviet trade are a favorite target for Soviet "self-criticism." Nothing conveys to the average Soviet citizen-consumer the impression the government really has his interests at heart more than these frequent and candid ribbings of corruption and inefficiency in the wholesale and retail distribution systems. Seldom, however, does censorship permit their transmission abroad.

In publishing such unsavory material, the Soviet press invariably absolves the Soviet system of any blame or responsibility. The abuses involved are pictured as "capitalist survivals," the inference being that they presently will be outlived.

This picture is correct in the sense that government trade organizations have tended to attract persons who once were in private trade, either before the revolution or during the

NEP (New Economic Policy) period, when private trade was legalized for a time. Many of these persons, having endured severe personal hardship through confiscation and expropriation, are secretly antagonistic to the Soviet system—and privately bent on recouping part of their losses.

At the same time, much of the waste and inefficiency the papers inveigh against stems directly from absence in the government trade system of the commercial competitive element which operates as a powerful corrective to incompetence under a free economy.

No Soviet government trade organization can go bankrupt, no matter how mismanaged—unless the government as a whole goes bankrupt. Moreover, by eliminating the profit motive from trade, the Soviet trade system tends to deprive management and sales personnel of the main incentive toward greater effort and efficiency.

This is no hypothetical argument. One may see the results on every side, in the prevailing slovenly nature of the window displays, in the indifference of sales clerks toward customers (model stores excepted), in buying stock without reference to consumer demand.

One roving reporter, for example, calculated that it would take the local toy stores in the town of Baku three thousand years to dispose of their present supply of jack-in-the-boxes. He also told how the local pharmacy trust, unable to dispose of its stocks of tooth powder, finally sold the lot as ceiling whitewash.

Another story dealt with the leading Kiev art shop, which, instead of supplying the public demand for busts of Lenin, Stalin, and other Soviet leaders, glutted its shelves with plaster cherubs and Cupids. When the "apolitical" bourgeois character of these exhibits was called to the manager's at-

tention, he merely chopped the wings off the cherubs and Cupids, tied red kerchiefs around their necks—and tried to palm them off as statues of “young pioneers.”

Besides bad management, petty grafting is fairly common in Soviet retail trade. One of the favorite practices, judging by press reports, is for a store manager to mark up certain highly salable items just a fraction above the authorized retail price. He then splits the difference with his book-keeper and sales force. Such cases are small stuff compared to the full-dress public scandals that are aired from time to time.

A year or so ago, the Moscow newspaper, *Trud*, broke the story of a large ring of speculators operating in and around the state jewelry merchandising organization known as “Yuvelirtorg.” It began with a raid by the anti-speculation squad on a big jewelry store on the Petrovka, sometimes called Moscow’s Fifth Avenue. The police arrested seventeen persons and seized two million rubles’ worth of valuables in this first haul.

The technique employed by the speculators was simplicity itself. They stationed contact men outside the various Yuvelirtorg shops. Private citizens who came to sell their valuables to the store would then be approached with offers to buy their watches, jewelry, or gold coins, privately. If they agreed, the articles thus acquired would be either resold directly to private customers or else turned in to Yuvelirtorg. In either instance, the ring made a handsome profit.

One trick was to buy broken watches at a low price and sell them to the government organization at the price authorized for watches in good repair. *Trud* reported that more than two thousand defective watches were thus foisted onto the government at a profit of more than one million

rubles for the ring. All this was possible, it was stated, because of the complicity of the manager of the Moscow division of Yuvelirtorg and of his head bookkeeper.

Trud sharply rebuked the minister of trade for failing to take corrective action and even reprimanded the Moscow chief prosecutor for the "extremely sluggish tempo" of his investigation—and demanded that the case be followed through. No other paper touched the story.

One sequel of the raid on Yuvelirtorg, I learned from different sources, concerned a man whose phone number was found by the police in the possession of one of those arrested. The party in question was picked up one night and released five days later—but only after his wife had gathered up all the family valuables, including jewels and silverware saved from before the Revolution, and delivered them to the police officer in charge of the case. Thereupon, the man was let out and all record of his arrest destroyed.

The use of a government store front for private speculation is fairly common, not only in the case of jewelry but also in the so-called commission shops, which sell clothing, furniture, musical instruments, and *objets d'art* of every description for private owners, deducting a fifteen per cent commission. In such cases the appraiser either will refuse to accept the article for sale on commission, or else will name an unacceptably low figure.

As the chagrined owner reaches the door, he is accosted by someone who offers him a better price privately. The owner's mood by then usually is such that he jumps at an offer, even though he is not getting the price to which he is entitled.

Other instances of "underground capitalism" dug up by

the Moscow press have centered around such fabulous figures as the "button king," who cornered the button supply, short-circuiting the legitimate state channels, and the "mouse king," who built up a million-ruble private business breeding white mice, which he sold to state laboratories.

All this suggests that some private enterprise—even although it is of an underground nature—persists in Soviet Russia at this present stage of development.

VII

RUSSIAN CO-OPERATIVES —NOT QUITE IN STEP

ALONGSIDE the economic main stream of state ownership and management, the Soviet system permits the existence of consumer co-operatives and producer or artisan co-operatives. As a legal entity, the co-operative is closely akin to the collective farm, the determining factor being property relations.

Both the collective farm and co-operative are classified as *artels*, "voluntary" associations of small holders or producers who have pooled their assets and implements. Their "voluntary" nature is underscored invariably, even though the choice generally is between economic and, possibly, physical extinction and conformity.

The *artel* members, having given up individual titles to their property, still retain collective ownership as shareholders in the common enterprise. This is what differentiates the collective farm or *kolkhoz* from the state farm or *sovkhos*, and likewise distinguishes the consumer and producer or artisan co-operatives from state enterprise.

Because of the collective ownership vested in the members, as opposed to complete nationalization, the *artel* is considered a transitional form, between private and state ownership.

Since the war, the Soviet government has encouraged the

growth of both consumer and producer or artisan co-operatives. It was hoped the co-operatives would tap reserves of foodstuffs, raw materials, and labor power not reached by state enterprise. The consumer co-operatives, for example, were authorized to purchase surplus foodstuffs from peasants and collective farmers who, owing to distance or lack of transportation, could not market them on their own.

The producer or artisan co-operatives were intended primarily to increase supplies of consumer goods, using local materials and the labor power of home workers (*nadomniki*), artisans, and handicraftsmen, otherwise hard to integrate into Soviet industry, with its stress on mass-production methods.

It further was hoped that the competition of the co-operatives might serve as a stimulus to state enterprise.

In theory, at least, the *artel* leaves a certain legitimate scope for private initiative. Once the obligations of the *artel* to the state have been fulfilled—whether in the form of produce, manufactured goods, or trade-turnover taxes—the members are free to dispose of any surplus as they wish.

This is just one illustration of how the Soviets sometimes smuggle in through the back door concepts they have rejected and condemned publicly.

In practice, the co-operatives have provided plenty of opportunity for private initiative, but not always in accord with the Kremlin's intentions. Some months ago the Tashkent paper, *Pravda Vostoka*, with rare candor, summed up the situation:

"Private entrepreneurs, businessmen, and speculators have found a broad field for anti-state activity in the co-operative system of the republic. Using the co-operatives as a front and exploiting their resources, they have fleeced the con-

sumer on an extensive scale, misappropriated public funds, undermined the economic and financial condition of the co-operatives, and inflicted enormous losses on the state."

Illustrating how these entrepreneurs operated, the same source reports how the head of a butcher co-operative used his position in order to buy meat at government wholesale prices, which he then resold in his own private store for five rubles above the legal retail price.

In another instance, at three lunchrooms belonging to the Thaelmann Co-operative, all the equipment, including the samovars, crockery, tables, and benches, was owned by the respective managers, who sold their own foodstuffs without turning in a kopeck to the co-operative.

At a town on the shore of the landlocked Aral Sea, the paper found that the managers of the local fried fish co-operatives had other fish to fry. Behind the co-operative front, *Pravda Vostoka* complained, "they themselves buy the fish, fry it, and sell it." One such capitalist fishmonger was reported to have built up a business with a monthly turnover of one hundred thousand rubles.

In Moscow, the scale of such operations naturally is larger than in outlying areas, and one of the largest operators was a certain V. A. Kantsel. This worthy obtained the approval of a district school board to set up a co-operative workshop ostensibly for the manufacture of school supplies. Though officially the undertaking employed only three persons, in his heyday Kantsel had three hundred persons working for him—and several officials of the school board were on his payroll in various fictitious capacities.

The legitimate production of school supplies accounted for less than ten per cent of Kantsel's productive activity—

this was for the sake of appearances. The remaining ninety per cent went into the manufacture of a diversified line of pennants, games, novelties, small souvenirs, and picture postcards, all of them marketed privately on the side—"on the left," as the Russians say. On the days of big football (soccer) games at Moscow's capacious Dynamo Stadium, Kantsel and his aides would arrive on the scene with a large unfolding display case and do a brisk and lucrative trade in postcard photos of the leading players and kerchiefs and pennants with the colors of the various teams.

Kantsel's enterprise thrived until one morning the law caught up with him. The premises were padlocked and the ringleaders marched off to prison.

Not only does the Soviet penal code classify as crimes activities which in Western countries come under the category of legitimate commerce, but the workman who does a minor repair job privately and keeps the money thus earned for himself, also is liable to prosecution.

From Kiev comes the story of a member of a wounded war veterans' repairmen's co-operative named Henbaum. According to the Kiev paper *Pravda Ukraïny*, Henbaum made a habit of taking private orders for repair of kitchen utensils and electrical appliances and keeping the money he received in payment. Moreover, complains the paper, though many people knew of this, nobody did anything to check his career of crime, until the revenue authorities learned of it and had Henbaum arrested.

Despite the risk involved, most Russian workmen prefer to work on the side—"on the left"—whenever they can. In Russia, if you want your kerosene stove fixed, your watch repaired, your roof mended, your room painted, or any other

job done properly, you will find it wiser to deal with the workman directly. Even if you are a good party member, you will see no harm in it!

When a Russian friend of ours wanted his piano tuned and renovated, he phoned a piano tuner co-operative which advertised in the Moscow evening paper. The tuner they sent to look over the job gave him a price of two hundred and fifty rubles. When the customer winced, the tuner explained that if he didn't mind waiting a few days, he himself would do the job privately, on his own time, for one hundred and fifty rubles. Without further ado, the customer paid the fifteen ruble call charge. The workman turned this money into his co-operative, together with the explanation that the customer had decided not to go ahead with the job.

As far as the co-operative was concerned, the matter ended there. A few days later, the tuner went to our friend's flat, and in the course of a few evenings fixed the piano. He pocketed his one hundred and fifty rubles, and nobody was the wiser.

VIII

LABOR UNIONS ARE SPEED-UP UNIONS

THE POST-WAR PERIOD has brought little relaxation to the Russians. Everyone who works, down to the last ditch digger, is being prodded and cajoled constantly into working at a faster pitch. Gone is the prewar prating about cutting the prevailing eight-hour day to seven hours. Today the man who refuses to "volunteer" for overtime is looked upon as "unpatriotic," and nobody likes to be called that.

One of the main agencies, but by no means the only agency, for getting the Soviet worker to work harder and longer, is the Soviet trade-union. The Soviet trade-union has nothing in common but the name with trade-unionism as conceived and practiced in Western countries. The sole similarity is with some old-time company unions.

While on paper the Soviet trade-unions are pledged to represent and defend the workers' interests vis-a-vis management in all disputes, including wage issues, and while all sorts of clauses on rights of appeal and arbitration are written in the charters, these provisions have about as much meaning and application as the civil liberties guaranteed in the Soviet Constitution. The actual power of decision resides elsewhere, beyond recourse. The strike weapon, labor's effective defense against arbitrary power,

is as utterly outlawed as it was in Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy.

As against this fictitious purpose, the real purpose of the Soviet trade-unions is to assist the government in getting as much work as is humanly possible out of Soviet workers. They function primarily as an enormous, well-oiled, nation-wide machine for transmitting to the great working masses the endless official ballyhoo campaigns aimed at keeping the worker constantly pepped up so that he will exert his utmost effort.

The trade-unions are the organizers and sponsors of the Stakhanovite or "socialist competition" movement, the principle of which is to get the workers competing with each other to work better and harder. Trade-union meetings are held at which speeches are made, resolutions passed, challenges issued from one brigade or worker to another to outdo each other.

To keep things from lapsing into routine, a whole military vocabulary is employed. One constantly is regaled with "victories" on the production front, of "battles" for lower production costs, for economy of raw materials, fuel, or electricity, and now, in particular, for improved quality. The whole effort is stage-managed by local trade-union leaders acting on directives from the trade-union center.

The scale of this sustained effort is indicated by the official claim that ninety per cent of all Soviet industrial workers and technicians take part in "socialist competition." The *Literary Gazette*, with a flair for literary phrase, enthuses: "In our country the Stakhanovite movement has flowered with a lush bloom—a great army of people tasking with their souls, with ardor, making their daily contribution to the common cause."

Every year produces its new crop of much-publicized stars of socialist competition, individuals who are built up as shining examples for the working rank and file to emulate. Some years, the emphasis is on quantity, other years on quality. Last year's campaign stressed quality, and its main hero was a Moscow textile-loom operator named Alexander Chutkikh. He was credited with having achieved spectacular improvement in the quality of his cloth. The Soviet press promptly took him up and he was blazoned from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok as "Initiator of the struggle for high-grade weaves." Soon he was showered with honors, including a Stalin Prize.

Pressed by admirers for the story of his signal success, Chutkikh confided in a published article that "it was all quite simple." One morning, saddened by the news that consumers were grumbling about the quality of cloth, he decided to investigate for himself. He made the rounds of the shops. In one place a woman flung a bolt of cloth down on the counter and walked out. Chutkikh examined the bolt and found himself agreeing with the disgruntled customer. The cloth was of curious hue, with an ugly pattern.

Then and there Chutkikh had his flash of inspiration. "It suddenly came to me that competition for increase in quantity of manufactured goods must be supplemented with competition for excellence of quality. At a meeting of factory Stakhanovites I suggested organizing brigades for excellent quality. I was seconded. My unit became the first in the plant to produce first-grade cloth. The newspapers wrote it up."

That was all there was to it. Thereafter, continued Chutkikh, the letters started pouring in. "People I had never met wrote in asking advice, wanting to know what they should

do in order to produce only high-quality goods. There were hundreds of such letters. Boatmen, road-builders, butter-makers, and metal-workers all wanted the same thing—to turn out excellent products so as not to blush before the Soviet consumer."

Just what magic "open sesame" Chutkikh dispensed in reply to these queries is not clear, either from his own statement or from the voluminous press publicity. Perhaps it is a state secret. At any event, overnight almost, the Soviet press reported "Alexander Chutkikh Brigades" were being formed spontaneously, all over the country, and even in Bulgaria, by his ardent emulators.

Though Chutkikh held the center of the limelight, he did not monopolize it. Numerous other model workers got their names and pictures in the papers, all of which moved the *Literary Gazette* to contrast this "Soviet glorification of the toiling man" with America, where it charged only gangsters like Al Capone are so celebrated. Presumably, there is no intent to imply that racketeering was involved in both cases.

The stars of "socialist competition" are strictly one-season wonders retired to oblivion as soon as the novelty wears off. Year before last, a similar fuss was made over Alexander Matrosov, credited with achieving no less sensational improvements in the production of shoes by leather- and time-saving proposals which, when described, sounded elementary to the point of naivete. Today, Matrosov is as forgotten as other model workers before him.

A salient and laudable aspect of the "Stakhanovite" campaigns is their stress on the importance of developing and encouraging "innovations." But the campaigns themselves seem sadly in need of a bit of innovating. Though the stars change and the focal point shifts from one industry to

another, the methods, slogans, and cliches have scarcely altered since the whole movement was initiated in 1935 with the Donbas miñer, Alexei Stakhanov.

This does not imply that the concerted ballyhoo fails in its purpose of making people work harder. But the attempt to present the whole performance as "spontaneous" and initiated by the rank and file is as fishy as a can of caviar. The result—in great output or better quality—is achieved by the sheer concerted drive and overwhelming impact of a mighty and unopposed propaganda machine. The Soviet trade-unions, backed by the Communist party, the Soviet government, and the entire press, comprise its vital cog.

The workers, engineers and technicians conform, though the whole thing is, of course, strictly "voluntary." They well know the price of nonconformity.

The role of Soviet trade-unions as promoters of Soviet patriotism and communism is set forth in a new treatise on trade-union status, adopted at the recent All-Union Trade Union Congress.

While the statute specifies that trade-unions are non-party organizations to which workers belong irrespective of race, nationality, sex, or religious convictions, it specifically recognizes the leading political role of the Communist party.

The statute sets forth that the trade-unions will assist in the plan for fulfillment of quotas, reduction of production costs, and improvement of quality.

To these ends, the trade-unions are pledged to "organize socialist competition of workers and employees," and to facilitate adoption of a piece rate and progressive premium system in wages. The statute authorizes them to conclude collective agreements with management.

The rights listed for trade-union members include the

right to criticize local and higher-up trade-union officials, and to appeal to the union for redress against managerial abuses.

Duties of members include strict observance of labor discipline, conservation of public socialist property, improvement of personal skill and productive capacity, observance of the statute, and regular payment of dues fixed at one per cent of actual earnings.

The statute declares, "in the Soviet Union, the exploiting classes are completely liquidated, exploitation of man by man ended forever, and unemployment abolished."

The statute obligates unions to take a special interest in the welfare of women, "promoting their participation" in "state productive and social life" as well as in the "Communist education of children."

The statute also states that the unions shall "develop a feeling of proletarian internationalism and fight for the unity of the international labor movement, for enduring peace, and democracy throughout the world."

In an accompanying resolution, the Trade Union Congress recorded its support of Soviet foreign policy and expressed the "warmest gratitude" to the Soviet government for supporting World Federation of Trade-Union proposals before the United Nations. The congress approved the All-Union Trade Union Council's international activity in favor of the WFTU and against "splitters of the international labor movement."

IX

HOW INDUSTRIALIZED IS RUSSIA?

1

SOVIET INDUSTRIALIZATION has rolled ahead with gathering momentum ever since the war.

Not only have wartime losses been made good, but today Soviet industry is far more diversified and better equipped technically than ever before. Quality improvements have occurred in almost every line.

Available percentage figures indicate a geometric increase in production of farm machinery—tractors, harvester combines, reapers, cultivators, and even such refinements as potato diggers and cotton pickers. At Stalingrad, top priority was given to the reconstruction of the great tractor plant which in wartime turned out tanks up until the moment the first German assault wave tossed hand grenades through the windows.

Less successful than in some other fields have been Soviet attempts to mass-produce washing machines.

A glowing account of a Soviet-designed sample model confirmed the impression that the Soviets had more or less duplicated, if not invented, the original washing machine. It was described as a zinc-lined tank with a spherical drum inside, mounted on an eccentric axis, designed to rotate

with a lopsided wobble when the electric motor was switched on.

There also was a manually operated version with a crank instead of a motor. On the better models a gas burner under the tank kept the water warm.

Mass production of this triumph of Soviet ingenuity originally was scheduled for early spring, 1949.

Before the war, the country had only two important automobile plants, the Stalin plant in Moscow and the Molotov plant in Gorky. Both turned out sturdy standardized trucks. The Gorky plant, in addition, mass-produced the M-1, a fairly serviceable version of the 1933 Ford, while the Stalin plant produced the ZIS 101, a rather unwieldy, seven-passenger, eight-cylinder job.

I recall that the General Motors representative, who in those days was permitted to visit Moscow on business from time to time, after a careful inspection of the ZIS 101 assembly line, estimated that each unit must cost about seventy-five thousand dollars to produce.

Postwar successor to the ZIS 101 is the ZIS 110. During the war, many of the Stalin plant's engineers and designers visited the United States, and the ZIS 110 is a tribute to their power of observation. Basically it is a 1942 Packard (Stalin's favorite make).

The ZIS 110 is a high-class automobile in every respect as regards design, workmanship and quality of materials. As its production never has exceeded two a day, it is essentially a custom built automobile.

The greatest postwar production achievement of the Soviet automobile industry to date is the Pobyeda (Victory), a trim, four-cylinder light car of Soviet design, produced at the Molotov plant in Gorky.

The first contingent of Pobyedas was released in Moscow in March, 1947, just in time for the opening of the Big Four Council of Foreign Ministers meeting.

Pobyedas are on sale now to private citizens for eighteen thousand rubles, and one thousand six hundred Pobyeda taxicabs ply the streets of Moscow alone.

For speed, riding comfort, general performance and stamina, the Pobyeda is quite as good as any European or American car in its class. In the near future, the Gorky plant will begin mass production of the ZIM, a heavier, six-cylinder model.

The Miass plant in the Urals produces the same line of trucks as its mother factory, the Stalin plant in Moscow. It, too, is scheduled to begin mass production of passenger cars. New auto plants are in construction at Minsk in Byelorussia and Kutais in Georgia.

Soviet industrial progress is still seriously handicapped by the absence of free competition—the mainspring that keeps American or British manufacturers on their technological toes.

Without the constant, tugging urge to outdo their competitors, Soviet industry, when not prodded, tends to crystallize around “safe” familiar patterns. Management, left on its own, cautiously avoids innovation and attendant uncertainties, the more so because of the disastrous personal consequences of failure.

In like manner, the paramount concern of every Soviet factory manager with fulfilling his production plan militates against changes and improvements, since these usually involve temporary production stoppages during change-over or retooling and hence a reduction in output that looks bad on the production report.

Every smart Soviet factory manager keeps on hand a surplus of easy-to-produce stop-gap items on which he can draw whenever required to cover a production lag in a more complex line.

To give an illustration, the Soviet state organization for distributing textiles offered a certain sewing workshop 220,000 rubles' worth of high-grade poplin for the manufacture of men's shirts. The shop director refused the consignment on the grounds that shirtmaking was fussy and unprofitable—he preferred fulfilling his plan by cutting and hemstitching handkerchiefs—despite an acute shortage of shirts in the selfsame town.

To fix the responsibility of management for quality of output and production efficiency, all Soviet industry is being transferred to strict cost accounting. State subsidies, on which management in the past could rely to rescue it from the red, are being done away with.

This new departure actually is a return to more conservative business methods, and another example of Communist readiness to borrow from capitalism when it serves the purpose.

2

SHORTAGE of gasoline and Diesel and lubricating oils is likely to become the most crucial gap in Soviet economy unless new and rich deposits are found—and found soon.

Consumption of these petroleum products is scheduled to rise astronomically in the immediate future as more and

more tractors, self-propelled combines, trucks, and automobiles roll off assembly lines.

Yet even now supply is barely abreast of demands, and the scarcity of lubricants, in particular, has led to extensive efforts to save and refine used motor oil.

Meanwhile, production at Russia's oldest and largest Baku field is slowly but surely beginning to lag as well after well runs dry.

Vast, uncharted oil reserves probably exist somewhere beneath the U.S.S.R. subsoil, but prospecting so far has still to locate them, although year by year increasing funds and effort are concentrated on the search.

Some new strikes have been made from time to time. A few years ago, deposits discovered at Ishimbai in Bashkiria, close to the borderline between Europe and Asia, were hailed as many times larger than Russia's oldest and biggest Baku field. From the outset this area was referred to as "the second Baku."

Though it has developed, in fact, into the Soviet's second largest domestic oil source, initial forecasts that within a decade it would surpass the original Baku field have not been justified.

At the original Baku field, meanwhile, no attempt is being spared to bolster sagging production. A large new prospecting organization was formed there two years ago to step up the search for new reserves in neighboring areas and at deeper levels in the old fields, and new techniques were introduced to re-exploit abandoned wells.

Despite this, last year's output fell 6.3 per cent short of plan fulfillment.

In his report to the local party congress of recent date, M. D. Bagirov, Secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist

party, laid the blame for this lag on the new prospecting organization, which, he said, had failed to fulfill its plan for finding new reserves. He further upbraided the heads of the Baku oil trust for not doing enough, by means of compression and other methods, to flog the last drops of oil from the tired old wells.

Another speaker at the congress concurred with Mr. Bagirov and charged the prospectors lacked "proper geological guidance." He urged them to carry their search for oil farther out to sea beneath the waters of the Caspian.

Efforts to increase output at Russia's second oldest oil fields at Grozny in the North Caucasus also have failed so far because of limited and declining reserves.

The Emba oil fields on the northeastern shores of the Caspian which have been exploited for the past fifty years, reached their all-time production peak in the wartime year of 1943, when output climbed forty-one per cent above the 1940 figure. Since then, there has been a sharp decline, which local party spokesmen likewise ascribe to failure of the prospectors to find new deposits and to lack of intensive exploitation of the old wells.

The search for oil has also been going on in Uzbekistan, where, according to local party sources, small deposits have been located at several points, giving grounds for hope that large reserves may also be located. Some eighty wells have been sunk so far.

Elsewhere in Central Asia, minor deposits have been found in the Djalal-Abad area of Kirkhizia. But here, too, prospecting and exploitation are far from meeting their goals.

In his recent report to the Ukrainian Party Congress, Secretary-General Nikita Khrushchev promised extensive but

unspecified plans for stepping up production in the fields around Lwow in the western Ukraine. These oil fields, more than any other single factor, explained Soviet refusal to hand back the Lwow district to Poland at the end of the war.

Another forlorn hope is fed by an intensive—but so far fruitless quest for oil in Georgia. According to Secretary-General Charkviani, of the Georgian Communist party, “prospecting for oil in Georgia has been carried on for a long time, but oil deposits of major industrial significance have not yet been located.”

Mr. Charkviani went on to assure his listeners there were more and more indications that “the depths of our republic conceal large reserves of oil.” From this he concluded that all that was needed “to find large oil horizons and on this basis set up a big oil industry” was intensified prospecting. He went on to urge that if prospectors kept boring more often and deeper, they eventually would strike oil. And he blamed their failure so far on the contention they had not been boring enough.

In a country where information on strategic resources is a jealously guarded state top secret, these statements from high party sources add up—reading between the lines—to a surprisingly frank and damaging admission that the Soviet Union is getting short of oil. Otherwise, it is not likely that huge sums and tremendous effort would be expended on hit-or-miss boring and on the exploitation of submarginal and exhausted fields.

Even the shale deposits of Estonia, which before the war supplied just about enough oil to meet the requirements of that country's one million population, are being squeezed now to the last drop.

This situation also explains why the Soviet government casts a roving and covetous eye on foreign sources of oil. It is not hard to imagine the Kremlin's chagrin when the oil-concession deal in northern Iran fell through.

Hence, the growing Soviet interest in the oil-rich Middle East, the total absorption of the Roumanian output and elimination of British and American interests from the Roumanian fields, the steadfast determination with which the Soviets cling to the Zistersdorf oil fields in Austria, their keen interest in developing synthetic oil production, and, finally, the recent sharp cut in gasoline deliveries to East Germany.

Many observers consider Russia's oil weakness, which has been accentuated by industrial developments, one of the most cogent reasons in the Kremlin against risking a large-scale war at present.

X

THE GREAT HUSH-HUSH

THE SOVIETS have scored their most impressive postwar gains in the reconstruction of devastated areas and in lifting industrial production beyond the prewar peak.

According to official sources, 407,000 rural dwellings were built in the invaded portions of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (Russia proper) in the three-year period from 1946 through 1948, as well as 189,000 farm buildings. In the Ukraine, which was completely overrun, 800,000 rural dwellings were rebuilt or restored, and 200,000 farm buildings, in the same period.

Nineteen forty-eight's grain harvest totaled seven billion *poods* (a *pood* is 36 pounds), almost equaling the 1940 bumper figure. In industry, some four thousand factories, plants and mines started or resumed production during the single year of 1948. The total industrial output for the same year was given as eighteen per cent above the 1940 level and twenty-seven per cent over the previous year, 1947.

In war-devastated areas, the 1948 advance over 1947 was given as forty-one per cent, the gain being largely the result of restoration of some of the big Donbas industrial units destroyed or put out of action during the war.

The only published data on Soviet industrial production are the percentages of plan fulfillment and percentages of gain over previous years. The basic figures—the actual proc-

ess whereby the percentages are computed, the indices and standards of comparison used, including what adjustments, if any, for the revaluation of the ruble at the end of 1947—are closely kept secrets of the central statistical administration of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R.

Aside from an understandable withholding of production data which, though public property in most countries, might give a clue to the Soviet Union's war potential, the Russians are even coy about the output of the most peaceful consumer goods. Figures on the production of textiles, galoshes or sausages are scarcely more available than figures on the output of tanks or planes.

Without the statistical key, the percentages given in the plan fulfillment reports are a sort of statistical cipher, more mystifying than enlightening, and this doubtless is just how these reports are intended by their devisers.

The one important exception to the percentage method of presentation is the annual national budget, presented regularly each spring to the Supreme Soviet for approval.

Here, instead of percentages, one has millions and billions of rubles to conjure with. But the categories are so general where economic matters are concerned—there is no breakdown of the global figure assigned to industry, for example—and the price equivalents are so nebulous that the budget supplies scarcely any more hard information on the Soviet economy than the plan-fulfillment reports.

The most that can be said for the budget is that it gives some indication of expenditure and sources of revenue, as well as of capital investment, plus some fairly specific data on cultural activities, education, and social services.

Oddly, the national budget makes no provision for foreign trade in either its income or expenditure sections,

though foreign trade is a state monopoly. Nor will the student glean the least information on this subject from any published Soviet source. In this respect, imports of Bata shoes from Czechoslovakia are cloaked in the same hush-hush as imports of uranium from that neighboring country.

The same statistical blackout applies to Soviet takings from eastern Germany in the form of reparations from current production. Yet in such lines as automobiles and electrical equipment alone, the figures must run into millions of rubles, all of it clear gain. On the streets of any Soviet city today, the standard German BMW (Bavarian Motor Works) two-door sedans produced in the east zone outnumber cars of any other single make.

All this ultra-secretiveness is largely a postwar development. Before the war, detailed data on a wide range of subjects were published by the State Planning Commission and other government agencies.

No data at all, in any size, shape or form, are ever published on Soviet "penal corrective labor" enterprises, though these enterprises, operated by the MVD, are doubtless, to say the least, a far from negligible factor in Soviet economy.

As with everything, the Soviets approach statistics from the standpoint of the party line and its requirements. The statisticians generally are told ahead of time what their figures are to show, and often, if the figures do not add up to the required answer, so much the worse for the figures and for the statisticians who compile them.

A graphic illustration of this attitude was provided by the suppression of the 1937 census. Instead of releasing the findings, the papers charged that counter-revolutionary wreckers had wormed their way into the Census Bureau and doctored the figures. According to the grapevine, the trouble

was that the query on religious beliefs included in the census questionnaire had disclosed an alarmingly high proportion of believers. At any event, in 1939 a new census was taken with this question omitted.

The findings of the 1939 census were published, something which scarcely could happen today, for the Soviet government, in its present frame of mind, is likely to consider vital statistics a state secret.

At any event, there have been no more censuses announced, and despite the great demographical changes wrought by war, including the annexation of large territories with added millions of inhabitants, Soviet economists and sociologists writing for publication still must use the 1939 census figures. In like manner, the authorities so far have even refused to permit publication of a post-war Moscow telephone directory, though the 1939 edition by now is useless.

Any attempt to pursue the matter of Soviet statistics further than the authorized published material or achieve some intelligible breakdown would come under the category of economic espionage, subject to swift and severe penalties under the new Soviet catch-all law for safeguarding state secrets.

This situation makes it rather hard for students of economy or sociology outside closed party schools, where the pupils have been carefully checked and double-checked by the MVD. Yet this is just one of many Soviet barriers to that free flow of thought and knowledge so essential to human progress.

As for the foreign correspondent, even data from published Soviet sources are often deleted from his dispatches.

XI

SIBERIA—HIDING PLACE OF RUSSIAN INDUSTRY

FOR FIVE HUNDRED YEARS, pioneering Russians have pushed the frontiers of settlement east toward the vast untapped areas of Siberia and north into the frozen Arctic. World War II gave tremendous impetus to this historic trend by transplanting whole industries bodily from areas threatened with invasion to the secure fastness of the Urals and the endless country beyond.

Today, the eastward shift in the Soviets' economic gravity center continues unabated. The strategic lessons of the war have been thoroughly mastered. The northern areas also are being developed.

In the Siberian Kuzbas (Kuznetsk coal basin), in Central Asia, the Far East and Far North, vast, new, self-sufficient industrial centers are being built up with sources of raw materials and fuel conveniently located and with labor power and food locally available.

Ground for Magnitogorsk, iron and steel hub of the Urals, first was broken in 1928 at the foot of Magnetic Mountain, a vast, ferrous outcropping whence the city derives both its name and the iron ore for its blast furnaces. In 1939, its population numbered around a hundred and fifty thousand persons. The present estimate is double that number, and it is claimed that Magnitogorsk furnaces pour more molten

iron and steel than all the furnaces of czarist Russia combined.

A mere infant by comparison with Magnitogorsk is Miass. There, in the wilds of the main range of the Ural Mountains, a new automobile plant was assembled in 1942, mostly from machinery brought on flatcars from the Stalin automobile plant in Moscow, as part of the general wartime evacuation of industry to areas beyond reach of enemy action. With the machinery came personnel.

After the war, most of these were "persuaded" to stay on permanently in the wilderness and the Miass plant continued to expand. Today, it is mass-producing several types of trucks and soon will be turning out passenger cars. Meanwhile, a new Soviet city has grown up around the plant.

Many other Moscow enterprises spawned new units to the east in wartime, among them the giant Kaganovich ball-bearing plant, which moved many of its shops to the Urals. In Leningrad, the wartime mass industrial exodus has permanently altered the make-up of the city, as few of those who left with factories that were evacuated to new places have been permitted to return since.

It is perhaps a curious commentary on the continuity of Russian history that the forebears of the Leningrad evacuees, now compelled to resettle in the wilderness far from their beloved city, were forcibly transplanted by Peter the Great two centuries ago to people his new capital in what was then wilderness.

Another new Ural city that came into being through the war effort was Krasnoturinsk, site of the new giant Dogoslovsky aluminum plant. In the absence of population figures, the size may be gauged from the report that it has twenty grammar schools and an engineering school.

In a similar category is the town with the appropriate name of Asbest (for asbestos), in the development of which the Soviet government is investing more than two hundred million rubles under the current Five-Year Plan.

About a thousand miles to the east of Magnitogorsk, in the Kuznetsk Basin of western Siberia, stands the city of Stalinsk, site of the Stalin metallurgical combine. The village of Kuznetsk, which occupied this location before the Revolution, had four thousand inhabitants. Today the population of Stalinsk exceeds a quarter of a million.

Another product of successive Five-Year Plans in heavy industry is Kemerovo, administrative and coal-mining center of the Kuznets Basin. The area further includes the new towns of Prokopievsk, Andshero-Sudzhensk, and Leninsk-Kuznetsky.

The "youth city" of Komsomolsk was founded sixteen years ago by a pioneering contingent of five thousand Komsomol (Communist League of Youth) members on the lower reaches of the Amur River, in what then was untracked wilderness. Today, Komsomolsk boasts a population of more than a hundred and fifty thousand persons. Its industries include the largest metallurgical plant in the Soviet Far East, the Amurstal steel mill. It also has shipyards that build ocean-going vessels and numerous engineering works as well as thirty-six schools, fifteen clubs, and a sports stadium.

In the extreme northwest corner of the Soviet Union, where the Kola Peninsula juts out into the Arctic Ocean, are the growing cities of Kirovsk, headquarters of the Soviet apatite industry, and Monchegorsk, center of a large development in copper and nickel.

The town of Vorkuta lies along the banks of the Pechora,

not far from where this river joins the Arctic Ocean. Prior to 1942, the Pechora Basin was uninhabited Arctic tundra, though prospectors had found rich coal seams in the region. When the German invasion of the Donbas area cut off the coal supply, Soviet planners remembered the coal seams of the Pechora Basin. A long branch railway was built in record time across the northern wilds to link the Pechora Basin with the main Soviet rail network. Shafts were sunk, and today production is proceeding on a large scale.

The city of Vorkuta came into being concomitantly, and today numbers several tens of thousands of inhabitants, has its own theater of music and drama, and a school of mines. In time, the Pechora coal mines will have a direct connection with the Magnitogorsk area, thereby supplying the Ural steel mills with high-grade coking coal.

Another important coal source is Karaganda, in the central Asian republic of Kazakstan. Coal first was discovered there in the middle of the last century and rights thereto were acquired "in perpetuity" by a merchant named Ushakov. Some thirty-five years later, Ushakov's heirs sold their still-unexploited concession to a French buyer, who, in turn, resold it to a British concern which sank a single shaft.

Today, production from many scores of shafts amounts to several million tons yearly and geologists calculate the reserves in billions. In 1939, Karaganda had a population of one hundred and sixty-six thousand persons. Today, it is over the quarter-million mark.

Another important industrial center in Kazakstan is Bakhash, the site of a big copper development.

XII

MVD—THE “THING” THAT STALKS

DURING our last weeks in Moscow, we obtained an unusual close-up of how the Soviet police state operates. The protocol and decorum that ordinarily shield foreigners from too-near contact with this Frankenstein—which we came to call the “Thing”—were suspended.

No longer content with peeking through the window, the “Thing” invaded the privacy of our home, peered over our shoulders, breathed down our backs. We suddenly realized that, despite our American passports, we had no more legal rights vis-a-vis the “Thing” than tens of millions of Soviet citizens all around us.

Lenin, in his famed essay, “The State and Revolution,” reduced the state apparatus to a common denominator of naked, unchecked coercive power—army plus police force plus prisons—in the hands of the few who impose their will on the helpless multitude. Though Lenin had in mind the czarist state which he was out to destroy, the Soviet police state he established is a carbon copy of this concept.

The Soviet system took over the apparatus of czarist absolutism—the army, police, and, in particular, the prisons and penal settlements. It expanded and refined this heritage to the point where Nicholas I and his *gendarmierie* or Nicholas

II and his Okhrana (secret police) would seem like easy-going amateurs.

Czarist absolutism in its heyday never succeeded in fully silencing the defiant voice of freedom. The Russian intellectual giants of the nineteenth century feuded with the government all their lives, and, though subject to various reprisals, never abandoned the field. The present regime never would suffer a Pushkin, a Gogol, a Belinsky, a Stal'tykov-Schedrin, or even a Tolstoy to denounce its tyranny, criticize its injustices, puncture its self-inflation, lampoon its hypocrisy.

It knows how to nip in the bud effectively the least indication of disaffection or rebellion. The difference between czarist absolutism and the Soviet police state is that when Lenin was sentenced to Siberian exile he was allowed to take his library with him and pursue his revolutionary writings.

Under czarism, the individual still enjoyed some legal defenses from the whim of absolutism. Soviet state practice recognizes no inalienable human rights or other limitations to its total monopoly of power.

Reversing the order of the social contract, the Soviet state does not derive its powers from delegation from the citizenry, nor is it their creation. The citizens are the creatures of the state, enjoying only such rights and liberties as the state affords them—and these the state is free to abrogate whenever it wishes.

Paradoxically, the Soviet "Stalin" Constitution guarantees a whole list of civil rights—including freedom of press, speech, assembly, fair trial, and independence of the courts. But this, like the Soviet "free" elections and the Soviet Parliament, is unreal window dressing.

The essence of power is vested in the Ministry of Internal

Affairs, whose three Russian initials, "MVD," cast a dread spell the length and breadth of the Soviet Union and even far beyond its borders.

The MVD need answer for its action to none but the top-most Kremlin hierarchy. No other ministry or government agency dares gainsay it, and I have seen high officials quake at the mere mention of the letters.

Just as the Soviet Constitution formally guarantees personal liberties which are denied in application, so the whole terminology of democratic society has been taken over and each word endowed with peculiar connotation closer to the opposite of their original meanings.

Thus, for "democracy" read "dictatorship," for "voluntary" read "compulsory," for "free elections" read "rigged, one-party ballots," for "peace-loving" read "truculent"—and you can't go far wrong.

Under the Soviet system the people have become the property of the state, along with land, industry, and other forms of national wealth. Hence, the state's right to dictate what the individual reads and thinks and to deny him access to all sources of unauthorized information.

Hence the right of the state to tell the citizen where he must live and work, to tie him to his job or place of residence more firmly than his serf ancestors ever were.

Hence the right of the state to specify whom he can or cannot marry, to reward or penalize him for the number of children he has or has not.

Hence the right of the state to invade his privacy by opening his mail, calling him in for third-degree questioning, or searching his home without pretext or explanation.

Finally, hence the right of the state to withdraw whatever limited freedom of movement it has accorded him any time

it so desires by the simple expedient of arrest, unhampered by habeas corpus.

In the Soviet Union nobody ever tries to sue the government or contest the legality of its actions. Against the overwhelming weight of absolute power the individual has no legal protection or redress whatever; he is at the mercy of the merciless.

I recall how *Krokodil*, the Soviet humorous weekly, once picked up the story of a life prisoner in an American penitentiary who sued a publisher for damages—and won the case. It was over the publication of his story which the publisher presumably had distorted.

The idea of a man serving a life-term sentence winning a court case appealed to *Krokodil's* sense of humor as absurd. Whoever heard of a convict in the Soviet Union winning a court case? The fact that under American laws even a lifer still might have legal rights was beyond *Krokodil's* understanding.

This view of the citizen as state property explains, among other things, the Soviet attitude toward displaced persons of Soviet nationality. The Soviet state demands the right to reclaim its citizens—regardless of whether they themselves wish to be reclaimed.

The Soviets, along with denial of other individual rights, do not recognize for their citizens the right of expatriation. The methods of the police state are nowhere so revealed as in the treatment of Soviet citizens who apply for permission to go abroad.

XIII

NO EXIT

A CURRENT MOSCOW anecdote concerns Ivan Petrovich, who is sent abroad on "*komandirovka*" (official business assignment). From Warsaw, his first stop, he wires the home office: "Long live Poland, free and independent!" Next, from Prague, he telegraphs: "Long live Czechoslovakia, free and independent!"

The cables are repeated in the same vein as Petrovich journeys to Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and other satellite countries. Then, after a long period of silence, comes a message from Switzerland that reads: "Long live Petrovich, free and independent!" That's the last Moscow hears of this particular Ivan, according to the anecdote.

To Soviet wives of foreigners, trying for years to join their husbands abroad, to husbands struggling to free wives and children whom the Soviets claim, this story has tragic poignancy beyond all humor. To them the Iron Curtain is no abstract Churchillian metaphor, but something very hard and impenetrable.

Let the record tell the story. It includes the names of some three hundred and fifty wives of American citizens who have sought permission to leave the country in the past nine years. Of these, fifteen women married former members of the American Embassy staff in Moscow. Ninety-seven of the others are wives of United States Army veterans.

Apart from the embassy case, the great majority are from former eastern Poland, the Baltic states, Ruthenia, or Bessarabia, and were married before 1939—that is to say, before these territories were annexed by the Soviets and Soviet citizenship automatically was conferred on all the inhabitants.

As the Soviet Union never has admitted the right of expatriation, the rule is that Soviet citizens are permitted to go abroad only in the interests of the government. Personal reasons, however compelling, cut no ice with the MVD officials who pass on exit visa applications.

Nevertheless, up until a few years ago, one or two Soviet wives of American citizens were let out every year. But since August, 1946, even this trickle has been cut off.

In another move in this direction, on February 15, 1947, the Soviet government issued a decree prohibiting Soviet citizens from marrying foreigners. This grotesque attempt to legislate affairs of the heart is not something the Soviet leaders are proud of or care to advertise, for the announcement was buried in the columns of the *Official Journal* of the Supreme Soviet, something few persons ever read.

To my knowledge, the decree never has been published or referred to in the Soviet press at large. When I mentioned it to Russians, their first reaction was one of utter incredulity. When correspondents tried to send the story abroad, it was killed by the censor.

What makes this law especially brutal is the apparent intent to apply it retroactively. Not content with banning future marriages to foreigners, the government seems bent on "liquidating" such unions as were previously contracted, and not only by forcing husband and wife to live in different

parts of the world. The entire pressure system of the police state is set in motion to break up the marriage.

It works like this. When a wife who has been waiting years for an exit visa goes around to the Visa Department for a routine inquiry on the status of her application, she is received by a "sympathetic" official, who, across the baize green desk top, where her file folder lies open, offers her "fatherly" advice:

"Are you really quite sure you want to go to America, citizeness," he inquires solicitously, "especially after the news from there? Why, with the crisis coming on, your husband may lose his job any day and you yourself be out on the street, starving."

After a pause to let this dire warning sink in, he adds: "Besides, you, as a Russian, will be under suspicion everywhere. The Un-American Activities Committee will be after you. You won't have a moment's peace. And remember, if you go, it's for good. Never again can you set foot on your homeland."

Another pause, during which the official thumbs through her file. When he resumes talking, his kindly tone has steeled slightly: "Citizeness, it may take a long time to get your exit permit—a long time." (Outright refusals are not in accord with usual Soviet practice.)

Then, on a more persuasive note: "You are young, attractive. Is it really worth wasting the best years of your life for the sake of a foreigner? Is he really worth it? What's wrong with our Soviet fellows? Look around you!"

Next, with a wrathful crescendo rising to a thundering climax: "I cannot understand how you, who claim to be a loyal Soviet citizen, can be prepared to renounce your birth-

right, to desert the socialist motherland that raised and educated you, for an American!"

If, at this point, the victim shows obvious signs of mental anguish, the inquisitor suddenly relents: "Here, here, citizeness. I did not wish to hurt your feelings. I simply was trying to help you with sound advice—not as an official but as an older fellow countryman. Go home—think it over."

At home, the chances are that if the wife happens to live with her parents, and likely as not in the same room, she is the target of constant nagging. Her family choruses:

"It's all very well if you choose to wreck your own life and queer yourself. But you've no right to ruin our lives. By getting yourself mixed up with foreigners, you've brought us all under observation—you'll get us all into trouble. It's time to put an end to it. Forget about that America. You'll never see it anyway."

Possibly, she and her family will also be needled in some way by the house manager—registration formalities.

Few persons have the moral stamina to resist such browbeating indefinitely. Sooner or later, all but the most steadfast wives have "voluntarily" broken down and filed for divorce. In such cases, the stringent Soviet divorce laws suddenly are relaxed. A process that usually takes many months is completed in a few days. The requirement that both parties must appear before the court is summarily waived.

To crown her humiliation, the wife also is "persuaded" to write a letter to *Pravda* or *Izvestia* publicly repudiating her husband, denouncing his country in the approved manner, and voicing her "wish" to remain in the beloved Soviet homeland.

Things have not gone well with the few girls who stubbornly have clung to their hearts' desire. There was the

Soviet wife of a certain American foreign service officer. Having tried but failed to get a Soviet exit visa for her and their small child, he had to leave upon termination of his Moscow assignment.

Six months later, the house manager—a profession which, in Russia, includes the duties of police informer—came to the flat she shared with her parents and announced she no longer could be registered there and must move out immediately. When she pleaded that she had nowhere to go, the house manager sneered: "Go to the Americans; they'll look after you."

She was given lodging and a job as housekeeper at an embassy billet. One day, a week later, she failed to return from a trip to the market, and has not been heard from since. The customary diplomatic representations to the Foreign Ministry have produced the customary silence.

Wives of Americans and Britons are by no means the only victims of the no-exit-visa policy. The case of the Soviet wife of the son of the former Chilean ambassador in Moscow was brought before the United Nations. Another case involved the Russian wife of the Greek ambassador. In neither instance did ambassadorial rank carry weight with the visa department.

Soviet wives of American citizens are only a small fraction of those who have made efforts to leave the Soviet Union and get to America. Approximately fifty-five hundred applicants have contacted the American Embassy in this connection in the course of the past nine years.

For an ordinary person in the Soviet Union to approach the American Embassy, even during the period of comparative cordiality, required considerable courage and determination. Embassy comings and goings are watched carefully and

checked by police and plain-clothes men on duty twenty-four hours a day outside the embassy. Any "unauthorized" visitor is certain to be marked for observation and possible detention.

Letters to the embassy are sure to be opened, and whether or not they are delivered, the MVD is sure to develop a far-from-friendly interest in the writer.

Accordingly, it is a reasonable assumption that for every application reaching the embassy there were several others who wanted to apply but were afraid or whose letters never were received. If the bars were suddenly lifted, there is no telling how many tens of thousands of Russians would reveal their desire to go most anywhere—but preferably to the United States.

Out of the total named, some two thousand persons filed claims to American citizenship. The remainder put in for immigration visas. As with the wives, the majority of all these applicants came from areas recently annexed by the Soviet Union and under Soviet law became Soviet citizens automatically by fact of residence.

As far as is known, only seventy-six out of the thirty-five hundred who sought immigration visas have been able to leave the Soviet Union, and of this number forty-one were not claimed as Soviet citizens. Thirty-three were given exit visas not to go to the United States but to Poland, as being of Polish racial origin under the Polish-Soviet repatriation agreement.

In 1947, in line with the policy change, the lid was clamped down completely. That year, Soviet citizens in this group received exit visas in three instances only. Two cases involved former Americans, widows of prominent Soviet citizens, one of them with two minor children. The third case

was that of the minor child of an American citizen, likewise the widow of a Soviet citizen.

Since 1947, not one exit visa has been issued to any member of this group, and only one non-American citizen was permitted to leave the Soviet Union for America—a Jewish boy whose parents had been killed in a Nazi concentration camp and whose sole relative was an uncle in the United States.

Of the two thousand claimants to American citizenship, about six hundred have been upheld, but only one hundred have been rejected. Save for two hundred and fifty now up for decision, the remaining cases have been tabled for lack of information, mostly because the applicants never were heard from again after their initial visit or letter.

Letters sent out by the embassy usually are either unanswered or returned undelivered.

However, it is estimated that there are upward of eighteen hundred persons in the Soviet Union who claim the right to American citizenship, and who wish to return to the United States but cannot obtain Soviet exit visas. The majority of them also are claimed as citizens by the Soviet Union, which does not admit the possibility of dual nationality. Since 1940, only seventeen of these persons have been permitted to leave—and none since 1946.

There also were some persons in the annexed areas whom the Soviets initially recognized as foreign citizens and who therefore were not claimed automatically as Soviet nationals. This was notably the case in former Polish territory and Lithuania, where persons who had lived in the United States and acquired American citizenship, or were born there of Polish or Lithuanian parents, returned for extended visits but retained their American passports.

In the beginning, the Soviet authorities respected this status and issued them residence permits as foreigners. Up until 1947, many of these persons were permitted to leave the country. But this group, too, was affected by the change in policy, and in 1948 only three out of more than fifty American citizens, previously recognized as such, were permitted to leave.

Others, when they presented their passports for exit visas, had both their passports and foreigners' residence permits confiscated and were pronounced Soviet citizens. Sometimes, husbands have been granted exit visas as American citizens while their wives and children have been refused permission to accompany or join them.

In all these newly annexed areas before the war a person with a dual-nationality claim was free to choose one or the other, although he legally could not hold two citizenships simultaneously. However, considerable latitude of interpretation was allowed. Thus, an individual with a claim to American citizenship might reside locally for years as a citizen of, say, Poland or Lithuania, and then leave the country on an American passport.

The Soviets now appear to consider that the slightest claim to citizenship of any of these countries—even though not exercised—rendered mandatory acquisition of Soviet citizenship at the time of annexation. The individual's preferences are regarded as having no bearing on the case.

The United States foreign service cannot extend even a minimum consular protection to the American citizen involved in these visa hold-ups, since the areas they live in are beyond the well-marked limits within which diplomats may travel and are deep within the so-called "Forbidden Zone."

The most that can be done is for the American Embassy in Moscow to make periodic representations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—protests which usually are ignored. As for dual nationals, or Soviet citizens, experience teaches that embassy solicitude, far from helping or improving their chances of getting to America, renders them likely candidates for a trip in a different direction.

XIV

AFTERMATH OF THE PURGES

THE POWERS and functions of the MVD are not set forth in the Soviet Constitution, that same constitution which describes the rubber-stamp Supreme Soviet as the highest law-giving body in the land.

The MVD does not feel slighted by this omission. On the contrary, it doubtless would resent any attempt to define its authority, since definition implies limits.

This deliberate avoidance of any set statutory framework is the clue to the MVD's central position in the Soviet system. It is unfettered, omnipotent police power reduced to practical organizational form—the state in the full sense of Lenin's definition of the state as “a machine for suppression.”

The MVD is not a subject the aspiring young Soviet student would be likely to choose for his master's or doctor's thesis. The MVD prefers the light of high-wattage incandescent bulbs in shut-in places to the light of day. It shuns publicity, and its feelings generally are respected. Consequently, commentaries by Soviet sources on the nature, structure, methods, and powers of the MVD are rare.

We, therefore, are all the more indebted to K. P. Gorshenin, Soviet Minister of Justice, for a brief but enlightening description of the MVD's origin and early evolution.

In December, 1917, Gorshenin explains, when the Soviet regime was but a few weeks old, a special commission was

established under the chairmanship of Felix Dzerzhinsky.

Its purposes, as set forth at the time, were:

1. Circumvention and liquidation of all counter-revolutionary and sabotaging attempts and actions throughout Russia, regardless of who the authors were.

2. Turning over to the court of the military-revolutionary tribunal all saboteurs and counter-revolutionists and drafting measures for the struggle with these (elements).

This initial decree further imposed specific limitations on the authority of the new organization:

The commission conducts only the preliminary investigation and only insofar as required for circumventive purposes.

In other words, at this early stage, the commission had no power to pass judgment and impose sentences. It simply conducted its investigation and turned its findings over to the court of the revolutionary tribunal. A semblance, at least, of due process of law was thereby preserved.

On December 13 (old style), 1917, the Council of People's Commissars officially designated the new body as the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Struggle with Counter-revolution and Sabotage, specifying that it was directly responsible to the Council of People's Commissars. Thereafter, the body was commonly known by its Russian initials, VChK, rendered colloquially as Cheka.

The first major step expanding the Cheka's original restricted character followed a few months later. Quoting Gorshenin:

"In March, 1918, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission proposed to all local soviets the immediate organization of local extraordinary commissions. At the same time, the

VChK stipulated that after the organization of local Chekas, the right to carry out all arrests, all searches, requisitions, and confiscations connected with counter-revolutionary crimes, speculation, crimes of office (presumably graft and dereliction of duty), and through the press (publication of anti-Soviet material), belongs exclusively to organs of the Cheka."

The comprehensive character of this list of functions is self-evident. But this tremendous expansion of its organization and its competency only whetted the Cheka's appetite.

According to Gorshenin: "At the end of 1918 the VChK was reorganized from an organ of investigation into an organ that also resorted directly to extra-judicial (i.e., without reference to the courts) measures of coercion, assuring swift and, of necessity, cruel repression of the enemies of the Soviet state."

In this candid definition Gorshenin has provided, let us hope for his sake unwittingly, a damaging expose of the fraudulent, phony character of the "rights" and "guarantees" of the individual written into the Soviet Constitution.

The fact that Gorshenin ranks second only to Foreign Minister Andrei Y. Vishinsky among Soviet legal authorities, lends added weight to his words. As head of the Ministry of Justice, which in the past on all-too-rare occasions (and even then, only lower local officials were involved) has blown the whistle on the MVD, Gorshenin knows whereof he speaks when he describes its methods as "cruel."

Mr. Gorshenin was dealing with the initial period of the Soviet police state. Since then, the Cheka has been successively renamed GPU, NKVD, and finally MVD. And with

every change of initials its organization and functions have expanded.

It outgrew its original name and frame with the close of the civil war period and termination of organized resistance to the Soviet regime, and was accordingly, in 1921, redesignated GPU—Russian initials for State Political Administration—with the added functions of guarding government offices—including responsibility for the extraordinary security regime at the Kremlin and for the personal safety of the Kremlin leaders, Stalin among them, guarding important installations, guarding the country's farflung frontiers, including the right to issue (or refuse) entrance and exit visas.

Within a few years it had organized and trained a compact, highly disciplined, well-armed, well-paid internal army whose members were fanatically loyal to the party leadership—this in addition to an all-pervading network of part-time and full-time undercover agents, with untold numbers of spies and contacts in every walk of Soviet life.

The GPU proved an indispensable ally to the Stalin leadership in the intra-party struggle, first with the Trotskyites in 1925-27 and with the "Rightists" in 1930.

Without the powerful arm of the GPU and its "extra-judicial measures of coercion," the regime never could have embarked on its stupendous campaign to drive the Russian peasantry into collective farms. Likewise, for many of the vast industrial construction projects of the successive Five-Year Plans, starting with 1927, the GPU provided an ample supply of forced labor.

In addition to its internal security functions, the GPU was placed in charge of all Soviet intelligence work, thereby

extending its activities to other countries, particularly those with important Communist minorities.

In 1934, the GPU was transformed into the NKVD or People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, with control over the civil and criminal police concentrated in its hands. Thereafter, even dog licenses were issued by the NKVD.

The great purges of the later thirties saw the widest application by the NKVD of "extra-judicial measures of coercion" when thousands of citizens were taken off into the night and never seen nor heard from again, only a tiny few being favored with the travesty of a public "demonstrative" trial.

One of the greatest paradoxes of all time is the fact that H. G. Yagoda, who headed the GPU through its period of greatest expansion, and who for years literally held the lives of Stalin and other Kremlin leaders in the palm of his hand—together with the lives of millions of plain citizens—ended as the victim of the very instrument he had helped to fashion: shot by one of the firing squads he had trained, convicted as a traitor under the same procedure he had devised and used against thousands of others.

Regardless of whether he was guilty or innocent of the charges against him—including the alleged killing of Maxim Gorky and a plan to assassinate Stalin—the implications for the Soviet police state system are equally devastating.

For if he was, as Vishinsky insisted as prosecutor at the 1938 purge trial in which Yagoda figured, a depraved, cold-blooded criminal with a lust for power, then how about the hundreds of thousands dragged off to forced labor camps or shot by GPU firing squads during Yagoda's decade of incumbency?

That is one question I have never heard a Soviet apologist try to answer.

The great purge began with a bullet in the back of Stalin's heir apparent, Sergei Kirov, in the drafty second-floor corridor of Leningrad's Smolny Institute on December 1, 1934.

A few days later, sharp-eyed readers of *Izvestia* could trace the letters "Stalin" faintly etched onto a published photograph of Kirov lying in state. More than three years afterward, *Izvestia's* chief editor, Nikolai Bukharin, was executed as a self-confessed traitor after the last of the notorious "model" trials.

By then the purge had almost run its course. The number of victims never will be known unless some day the archives of the Soviet Ministry of the Interior are opened to historians. But Russians who did not suffer close personal hurt in the purge are as rare as Russians unaffected by the war.

I recall the case of a German Communist we knew who held a responsible job. One night the NKVD took him away. It was rumored that he had belonged to the Trotskyites. His Russian wife, a long-standing party member, promptly added her own accusations. She cited domestic trivia, such as the circumstance that he always kept one drawer of his desk carefully locked and never permitted her to touch it, as evidence that he had guilty secrets to conceal.

This display of "vigilance" not only allayed suspicion, but so commended her to the favorable notice of the authorities that two years later she was sent to Washington as personal secretary of the Soviet ambassador, a supreme expression of party trust.

She returned to Moscow at the war's end to find that her

ex-husband (one of her first acts after his arrest had been to secure a divorce), like other German *emigres* for whom the Kremlin now had use, had been totally exonerated and was earmarked for an important post in eastern Germany. Her offer to go back to him was spurned.

Foreigners who had taken out Soviet citizenship were among those hit hardest by the purge.

Joe Fineberg had given the best years of his life to translating the works of Lenin and Stalin. At the end of 1937 he disappeared. Six months later he was released, looking twenty years older and minus his front teeth. The investigators had "removed" them while trying to determine his guilt or innocence.

Albert Troyer was a citrus fruit specialist from southern Alabama. Soviet talent scouts, looking for someone to help develop varieties of lemons suited to the Black Sea coast, persuaded Mr. Troyer to sign a lucrative *valuta* contract—salary in dollars deposited abroad, ruble expenses paid while in the Soviet Union.

When the Troyers reached Sukhumi in the summer of 1932, everything was better even than the contract provided. They had a cozy bungalow on the rim of a turquoise sea. Mr. Troyer's Soviet employers eagerly provided him with every experimental facility he requested. For the first time in his career he could cross and graft lemons to his heart's content. For nearly five years, the Troyers were very happy in their sub-tropical paradise. The lemons grew bigger and better, and Troyer, completely dedicated, had no time or interest left for political developments.

Then, one day in the spring of 1936, his immediate superior at the botanical station told Mr. Troyer an order had

come from Moscow that foreigners no longer could be employed, and that he, Mr. Troyer, must either quit or become a Soviet citizen. He was given three days to decide.

Mr. Troyer's wife was determined to keep her American passport, but he could not bear to give up his lemons. To him the question of passports seemed trivial compared to his research. Accordingly, he filled in the forms and turned in his American passport.

One week later he was arrested while at work. His wife was not permitted to see him. Packages of food and clothing which she took to the local NKVD were accepted for three days, but on the fourth day the package was returned with the explanation that it could not be delivered as her husband had been transferred to an undisclosed destination.

Soon the authorities made trouble for Mrs. Troyer, refusing to extend her residence permit. After fruitless efforts to learn something of her husband's fate, she left for Moscow. Sympathetic American Embassy officials who heard her story told her they could do nothing since her husband had signed away his American birthright.

Today, back home in the United States, Mrs. Troyer still awaits word of her husband.

We saw the purge at close quarters in those years. We occupied one room in a communal flat, and we lost several shifts of neighbors. Our room was next to the outer door, and when the squads rang the bell at two o'clock in the morning, I would jump out of bed and let them in.

They were blue-capped youngsters, scarcely out of their teens. When the man they were after happened to be away overnight, one of them dialed a phone number and asked instructions from a "comrade colonel." The speaker identi-

fied himself as "This is *Kursant* No. So-and-so." (A *kursant* is a trainee in special security troop officer schools.)

My most vivid recollection is that of a young mother. Across the years, I still can hear her screams as they took her two-month-old baby from her and she and her husband were led off to the "Black Crow"—Russian equivalent of the "Black Maria," or police wagon. Only three weeks previously her husband had returned from an assignment to Japan with all sorts of lovely presents for his wife and child.

The brakes were applied to the tumbrels in the summer of 1938, and soon the purge rolled into reverse. Nikolai Yezhov, H. G. Yagoda's accuser and his successor as head of the NKVD, vanished without trace. Minor purge abuses were investigated and denounced. The provincial papers were full of proceedings against ogrelike NKVD officials who had rounded up school children as counter-revolutionaries. By then the Kremlin realized that in its zeal to eliminate possible opponents, it had undermined public morale and impaired the country's economic and military strength through the wholesale destruction of intellect and talent.

The purge disclosed, among other things, the utter physical dependence of the all-powerful Kremlin rulers on their NKVD bodyguard.

Stalin and his retinue no longer appeared in public unless all within gunshot had been carefully checked for security. The Kremlin itself was an armed camp, bristling with tommy-gunners, ever on the alert to repel sudden attack.

These extraordinary precautions themselves were a source of gravest danger, for anyone who controlled this praetorian guard might easily have staged a palace revolution.

Such intentions, in fact, were imputed to Yagoda, and in

the course of the purge the Kremlin security set-up was cleaned out more than once.

Accordingly, in 1939, Stalin brought his fellow Georgian and old-time comrade, **Laurenty Beria**, to Moscow, to succeed the fanatical, unbalanced **Yazhov**. Thereafter, he doubtless rested easier.

XV

SOVIET ARTISTS TOE THE LINE—OR ELSE!

I

LAST YEAR, Tamary Motylyova, leading Soviet female literary critic, was fired from the faculty of the Gorky Institute of World Literature. Promptly thereafter the Ministry of Higher Education revoked the doctor's degree previously conferred upon her.

She was accused of demanding that Soviet literature be critical of its Soviet surroundings and of objecting to "the best works of Soviet literature" on the ground that they did not do so. Her guilt was compounded by the circumstance that she had once quoted an opinion of "the filthy traitor Leon Blum."

Moreover, in her book entitled *German Literature in the Struggle Against Fascism*, she made "the cosmopolite Lion Feuchtwanger" out as an anti-Fascist. This, in itself was enough to brand her as a "bourgeois cosmopolite" who "judged works not from the position of high party character but from the position of a cold and indifferent æsthete."

In plain language, Motylyova had committed the unforgivable sin of not using the party line as the supreme criterion of literary criticism.

The party has decreed that the purpose of literature is to advance the cause of communism, and the supreme judge of whether a given effort serves this supreme aim is the

Communist Party Agitation and Propaganda Department. Of recent months, the literary tastes of this body have shaped themselves around the concept of "socialist realism." This may be summarized as a negative attitude toward everything and everyone not pro-Soviet and a positive attitude toward everything Soviet.

Day by day, the requirements grow more didactic. Time was when Soviet writers dealing with the domestic scene felt that the term "realism" in the phrase "socialist realism" entitled them to portray some of the shortcomings, as well as the virtues, of the new society. That time is past!

Not long ago, the State Literary Publishing House was publicly upbraided, among other things, for reprinting *The Twelve Chairs* and *The Golden Calf*, witty masterpieces of that brilliant team of Soviet humorists Ilya Ilf and Yevgeny Petrov. The party no longer was amused by the pranks of their central character, the clever rogue Ostap Bender.

The objection was that by letting Ostap outsmart honest Soviet citizens the authors had "distorted Soviet reality."

Even Alexander Fadeyev, head of the Writers' Union and party stalwart, was ordered by the Propaganda and Agitation Department to revise his novel, *The Young Guard*, by far the finest Soviet book to come out of the war. Two years after *The Young Guard* had won the Stalin first prize, the Propaganda and Agitation Department suddenly objected to the fact that two underground party leaders in the book bungled and were caught by the Germans, while a Soviet Army general was made out to be a stuffed shirt.

Fadeyev admitted the "justice" of the criticism and promised to make the required changes. One does not argue with the Propaganda and Agitation Department.

Under the canons of "socialist realism," the hero of Soviet

literature is and must be "the new Soviet man," whose prescribed attributes are "moral purity, faithfulness in love and friendship," plus a "passionate feeling of Soviet patriotism." But with all the good will in the world a writer may run into pitfalls if he tries to vary the formula.

In his latest play, *Beketov's Career*, rising Soviet playwright Anatoly Sofronov, whose play, *Moscow Character*, earned him a Stalin first prize, tackled the subject of Soviet careerism.

Beketov, the villain of the piece, is an unscrupulous and ambitious engineer who frames and blackmails an innocent harvester factory manager in order to get his job.

The hero is Beketov's son, a fine, upstanding young Komsomol member, who discovers the foul play by reading his father's mail and, in good Komsomol fashion, turns his parent in to the proper authorities. Enthused the *Literary Gazette*: "The play presents questions of Bolshevik morality keenly and correctly. In it are shown the moral purity and clarity and noble inner world of the young Soviet man, for whom the motherland's interest are personal interests."

Sofronov's colleagues thought so, too, and awarded him a playwright's prize. Many theaters busied themselves adding *Beketov's Career* to their repertoires.

The Propaganda and Agitation Department thought otherwise, and its organ, *Culture and Life*, came out with a scorching denunciation of the play because it concentrated on the character of the careerist, who was held to be far more plausible than the "positive" characters.

Culture and Life went on to lash the *Literary Gazette* for its uncritical reviews of *Beketov's Career* and of another play, *Fiery River*, by Kozhevnikov.

The *Literary Gazette* editors promptly acquiesced and

editorially admitted that "unreservedly approving and even enthusiastic articles about these mediocre works" showed "a departure from Bolshevik integrity in the pages of the *Literary Gazette*."

As a rule, it is the older writers who find it hardest to adapt themselves to the literary canons of the Propaganda and Agitation Department.

Before the war, the fiction writer was still comparatively free to follow his fancy provided he did not attack the regime or inject anti-Soviet twists and nuances.

Some, like Mikhail Sholokov, the biggest name in Soviet literature, prefer to live on their royalties and reputations, sitting it out until policy changes. The brilliant poet Boris Pasternak, after being severely censured for non-conformity, has taken to translating Shakespeare.

Nikolai Pogodin, one of the best prewar Soviet playwrights, who so far has been unable to readjust himself, early this year publicly inveighed against "the compulsion that fatally influences the art of the theater."

By way of illustration, he charged that the director of the Moscow Art Theater—pinnacle of the Russian stage—in choosing a new play for production, reasoned thus: "Surov (the author) is now in favor. He's a party man and obviously knows what it's all about, so we can't go wrong." This, Pogodin said, illustrated the "prevailing cynical indifference."

Pogodin, after severe reprimands, fully recanted. His last play, however, *Missouri Waltz*, purporting to expose the corruption of Kansas City politics, earned him the criticism that his corrupt politicians were more human than his "positive types," the American Communists.

Despite individual setbacks, much of what is written

shows promise and talent. Some of the new plays are good entertainment. One of the few prose writers who has adapted himself to the new canon without losing his literary craftsmanship is Konstantin Fedin, whose novel, *Unusual Summer*, won him a Stalin prize this year. Also most readable is Vasili Azhayev's *Far From Moscow*, another prize winner.

All of these writers fully meet specifications in painting the "new man of the Soviet epochs" in the glowing colors demanded by the party Propaganda and Agitation Department.

At least, they do as of this moment.

2

ONE OF the genuine cultural achievements of the Soviet regime has been to bring the classics of Russian and world literature to the masses. The great writers of the past, especially the Russian literary giants of the nineteenth century, have been made widely available to the Soviet reading public in cheap editions. Their sales well exceed those of present-day Soviet works.

In performing this service, the authorities go to considerable lengths to establish the claim that the present Communist system is the lineal descendant and end-product of the finest cultural and literary traditions of the past—that figures like Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy, and even Byron,

if alive today, would be Communist party members in good standing.

This presentation requires considerable skill and resource on the part of the ubiquitous Communist Party Propaganda and Agitation Department. Though there has been no actual tampering with the texts to bring them into party line, there is a careful and purposeful censorship of selection and omission. Statements of a particular writer that are in sharp conflict with the party line are either ignored or played down.

The salient example of this type of adaptation was the official apotheosis of the great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin in connection with the observance of the 150th anniversary of his birth, celebrated with tremendous fanfare this spring. In an anniversary ode, Soviet poet Nikolai Gribachov exclaims: "I want to call him 'Comrade Pushkin'—as though we were of the same age."

The circumstance that most of the time Pushkin was at odds with czarist absolutism and czarist censorship is curiously construed as signifying that he would be in full accord with the present system. The *Literary Gazette* editorializes: "Pushkin's poetry plants in the hearts of simple, honest folk of the entire world faith in the inevitable triumph of peace and liberty of peoples."

In Communist parlance, this is an euphemism for the triumph of world revolution.

On the specific subject of foreign policy, the same source declares: "Pushkin was convinced of the lofty avocation of his people. He said: 'The liberation of Europe will come from Russia.'"

One leading Soviet critic, V. Yermilov, even derives the

anti-American campaign from Pushkin. He quotes the following excerpt: "For some time the North American states have commanded the general attention of thinking people in Europe . . . They saw with astonishment democracy in its most disgusting cynicism, in its cruel prejudice and intolerable tyranny . . . Greed and envy on the part of the voters, timidity and servility on the part of the administrators, such is the picture of America recently placed before us."

While Pushkin's role as the founder of modern Russian literature and of the literary Russian language is rightly emphasized, there is a tendency to gloss over his affinities with the West and deny his literary kinship with persons like Keats and Shelley and, especially, Byron.

In like manner, the Soviet regime has taken over the heritage of the great humanitarian and literary critic Vessarian Belinsky, whose short life was consumed battling with the czarist police state on behalf of intellectual freedom. Belinsky stressed the civilizing influence of western European culture on many aspects of Russian life, including literature, which he described as "a tree transplanted to Russian soil from the West." Were he here today, this alone would be enough to brand him a "bourgeois cosmopolite."

Such views are either ignored or discounted. One Soviet writer, without much regard for chronology, explained them away as dating from Belinsky's younger, immature period.

Gogol, who ridiculed the injustices and abuses of his time in his immortal *Dead Souls* and *The Inspector General*, also is acclaimed, even though "he did not see the way to overcome social contradictions." This, translated from party vernacular, means he was not in favor of violent revolution.

Gogol is prized mainly for his patriotism. A recent critic quotes with warm approval a passage wherein Gogol likens

the Russian nation to a fast-moving *troika* (vehicle drawn by horses). As it rushes past, "everything else on earth, other people and nations, stand aside and give way."

The brilliant satirist Saltykov-Schedrin, who mercilessly flayed the ignorance and prejudice of the czarist bureaucracy, also is hailed as a Soviet forerunner. The assumption is that were he here today he would find nothing to satirize in Soviet bureaucracy.

The Soviet claim to the gentle, penetrating Anton Chekhov is argued from the circumstance that his characters, frustrated by the drabness of their provincial lives, frequently prophesy the advent of a better, happier world. The assumption is that the present Soviet order is what Chekhov and his characters were looking forward to. Even the mighty Leo Tolstoy, for all his mythical idealism, has been pruned and grafted onto the Soviet ideological totem pole.

The salient common trait of all these intellectual giants was love of intellectual freedom and political democracy, in the full nineteenth century liberal—as opposed to the current Soviet—meaning of the terms. Were they here today, it is hardly likely this would endear them to the Soviet police state.

Academician Tarle, who has studied the source material, holds that Nicholas I deliberately connived to get rid of Pushkin and Lermontov, both of whom were killed in duels. Tarle writes: "Within a short time (four years), the two poets were liquidated without much trouble or unpleasantness."

The thought suggests itself that were they and most of the others here today, the process of liquidation would have been even swifter.

The one great Russian writer to whom the Soviet has laid

no claim but has repudiated as hopelessly and irredeemably reactionary is Feodor Dostoevsky. When critic V. Kirpotin sought to bring him into line he lost his post on the faculty of the Literary Institute. The *Literary Gazette* charged Kirpotin with "attempting to rehabilitate the vicious sworn enemy of the Revolution and democratic revolutionaries, Dostoevsky."

Still, of all literary figures, Dostoevsky would best understand the mentality of the police state. The proceedings of the political treason trials, with their uncanny self-accusations, often read just like a Dostoevsky novel. Dostoevsky would have felt far more at home in the present Soviet political temperature than Pushkin, and would have understood it better. Perhaps that is why he is so violently repudiated.

3

"WE MUST CREATE for Soviet children works that will wrathfully expose the beastly countenance of the Anglo-American imperialists, those warmongers, slave traders . . ."

Thus spoke shy mild-mannered Sergei Mikhaklov, favorite children's author, to the Eleventh Congress of the Kom-somol last spring. By that time, Mikhaklov, like so many other former friends, blushed with embarrassment and pretended not to see us if we chanced to run across him.

A few days after this speech, our son, practically in tears,

came home from a visit to his best friend, a Russian boy named Valya. Valya's big sister had been home. Our son had told her that we had promised him that if he behaved well and got good marks we would send him to America for the summer.

"H'm," sniffed Big Sister, "America indeed! You should be sent there as punishment if you're naughty, not for being good. Did you hear what Mikhaklov had to say about America?"

"I'm afraid I wasn't very polite after that," our son told us ruefully. "I told her she didn't know anything about America and to keep her fool mouth shut . . . and a lot more besides."

Thus ended a beautiful friendship. Our son's contacts, like ours, were diminishing rapidly—and for similar reasons.

Grownups in the Communist Party Propaganda and Agitation Department were consciously beaming the anti-American campaign toward the children. *Pioneer Pravda* and other publications for the young described American Boy Scouts as trained spies; said American children from the cradle upward played with toys patterned on the atom bomb and were trained as little warmongers.

We saw the practical fruits of this when neighborhood youngsters hurled insults at us over the fence, sometimes accompanied by harder missiles.

Denouncing America has become the surest key to literary, stage and political success, the quickest way for a writer, including a children's writer, to fill his pockets and prove his party loyalty.

No Soviet play or novel nowadays is complete without American diplomats, newspapermen, engineers, or businessmen who are at the same time spies and *provocateurs*,

either in the lead or in auxiliary parts. No comedy revue is complete without several anti-American numbers.

Constantine Simonov, first to hit the jackpot with an anti-American play (*The Russian Question*), declared in a recent burst of self-criticism that instead of spending so much time on the "split personality" of Hearst reporters he should have concentrated more on "their actual daily anti-Soviet activities."

Certainly as time goes on, the anti-American activities of Soviet writers tend to get rougher.

Roughest anti-American quickie to date is a play by party playwright Anatoly Surov titled *The Mad Haberdasher*. The chief character is a haberdashery salesman from Kansas City, Missouri, who has a strong physical resemblance to Hitler. The Pendergast machine politicians hit upon the idea of proclaiming that he is indeed der Fuehrer, secretly saved from the Chancellery bunker, and plugging him for President on an American Nazi platform.

Apparently some of the party Propaganda and Agitation Department gagged over this, for announced openings of the play have been canceled several times.

The party line on America runs thus: The United States is the center of world capitalism and the rallying point of all forces hostile to the Soviet Union, which is the leader of "progressive mankind" in this current period of world-wide polarization. The United States Government, which is the agent of American monopoly capital, is intent on achieving world hegemony, and in this connection is planning an aggressive war on the Soviet Union.

As is customary in Communist practice, once the line is formulated, the Propaganda and Agitation Department chooses the facts to support it.

Anything tending to show that American policy is not directed primarily toward war with the Soviet Union is suppressed. Nor are the Soviets prepared to admit the sincerity of any American who wants friendly relations between the two countries on a basis of mutual respect and fairness. The Russians do not admit such reciprocity. The price of Soviet friendship is to be a fellow traveler and play the Soviet game.

It should be added that in making its case sound convincing, the Department of Propaganda and Agitation is greatly assisted from time to time by the irresponsible statements of certain United States public figures, including members of Congress, urging immediate armed action against the Soviet Union, including the use of atom bombs. To the Soviet public this sounds like corroboration of *Pravda*.

The traditional feeling of friendliness and respect for America of the Russian people is the most serious home obstacle which the anti-American campaign must reckon with. These feelings were enhanced by the wartime alliance and by American aid to the Soviet war effort.

Not only is everything being done now to erase America's part in the war, but there is constant effort to discredit the American contribution in all fields of culture and natural science.

Writer Peter Pavlenko, for example, declared on his return from the New York "peace" conference that all music in America was imported, that Americans had no music of their own worth mentioning. Similar sweeping negations may be read almost any day in the Soviet press about American literature, art, architecture, techniques.

The fantastic purge of "passportless cosmopolites" last winter was designed to wipe out all influence of non-Communist Western culture and ideas, together with the last

sparks of intellectual integrity and critical faculty. Thereafter, the Propaganda and Agitation Department hoped, there would be none left to scoff openly or secretly at the crude efforts to credit Russians with most of the world's major inventions, discoveries and cultural achievements. In literature, the field would be cleared for the party hack who would write to order what the department wanted.

An outstanding example of what the department expects from a Soviet writer is playwright Nikolai Virta.

Virta has completely adapted his considerable literary gifts to the writer's prescribed role of party propagandist.

In 1946, when the party was busy jacking up collective farm discipline after wartime laxity, Virta wrote *Our Daily Bread*, a play about jacking up collective farm discipline.

In 1948, when the Communist coup was justified as "rescuing" Czechoslovakia from the West, Virta wrote *Conspiracy of the Doomed*, a play about how a Communist coup in an Eastern European Slav country barely forestalled an American plot to seize the country.

Virta's latest, just completed, is a play portraying the struggle of Yugoslav "patriots" against the Tito "renegades." It is a safe conjecture that at least one of the villains in this piece will turn out to be an American spy.

WHEN we left for Moscow on long-term assignment back in 1946, Dr. Sergei Alexandrovich Koussevitzky, now dis-

tinguished and beloved director-emeritus of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, gave us a consignment of clothing and other gifts for his old friends among Soviet musicians.

His instructions were, if possible, to turn everything over to R. M. Glier, a minor composer and one of his classmates at the Moscow Conservatory, requesting Glier to make the distribution.

Having secured Glier's home address, one evening, by appointment, my wife and I drove to his house with our largest suitcase. The Gliers proved to be a pleasant, elderly couple. They had just moved into a new flat, but water had spoiled the living-room ceiling and fixing it would prove quite expensive.

Our host rummaged inside an old secretary and produced a yellowed group photograph, where, among the rows of earnest young faces staring into the camera shutter, he picked out himself and Sergei Alexandrovich. Glier glowed at the recollection of their old friendship, and when we told him that Dr. Koussevitzky was hoping to give some concerts in Russia and had offered to the Soviet authorities to pay the entire expenses for himself and his orchestra, Glier was enthusiastic. As a member of the Composers Union executive, he declared he would do his utmost to promote the trip.

As for the clothes and gifts, Glier readily agreed to make the distribution and promised to send us word of how he had arranged it when he returned our suitcase.

Dr. Koussevitzky's proposal to bring over his orchestra at his own expense and give the box-office receipts to aid war orphans elicited no response whatever, although it was made repeatedly through several channels. It was the same with all other American moves to develop cultural relations with

the Soviet Union. Any such plan, including musical relations, was definitely out of tune with the party line.

This became graphically and publicly apparent two years later when the Communist party, under the ægis of the late Andrei Zhdanov, initiated the first musical purge in human history.

The musical purge began in a rather offhand manner. The Bolshoi Theater offering in honor of the thirtieth anniversary of the revolution in November, 1947, was the brand-new opera, *Great Friendship*, by the Georgian composer, Vano Muradeli.

From almost any party angle the choice seemed a safe one. The opera dealt with the revolution and civil war in the Caucasus, culminating in the victory of the Bolsheviks. The composer was Stalin's fellow countryman. The Bolshoi, however, had reckoned without Zhdanov, himself an amateur musician of considerable accomplishment and with definite ideas on the subject of music.

So, after the first highly laudatory press notices, there came a party decree which lashed the score as full of dissonances and declared it showed the influence of Western bourgeois-decadent music. Not content with this, like charges were leveled against a whole galaxy of leading Soviet composers, including Sergei Prokofiev and Dmitri Shostakovitch.

In standard purge fashion, there followed "self-critical" meetings of the Composers Union, at which the smaller fry took turns sniping at the fallen idols (in the Soviet Union the only time you can hit a man is when he is down) and the composers under fire "confessed" their mistakes.

Shostakovitch proved most adroit at this and earned commendation for his "sincerity." Though most of the music

that won him world acclaim has now been scrapped as far as the Soviets are concerned, his theme music for the filming of Fadeyev's novel, *The Young Guard*, was lauded as "showing promise." Since then he has completed his comeback with his *Cantata of the Forests*, written in praise of the party reforestation program.

Unlike Shostakovitch, Prokofiev refused to do public penance. He stayed away from the inquisitorial meetings on the grounds of ill health, but furnished the required written incantations together with assurances that he was making every effort to compose what the party wanted.

Prokofiev had returned to Russia from voluntary exile in the early 1930s at the invitation of the Soviet government. With him came his charming Spanish-French wife, Linette, who for his sake became a Soviet citizen. They had two sons. We had known the family many years. In 1939, when my Russian-born wife was rather appalled at the prospect of going to America for the first time, Prokofiev had humorously reassured her as to conditions in New York and how she would like it there.

Came the war. Prokofiev, apparently anxious to disassociate himself completely from his *émigré* past and go native, jettisoned his family. He must have reasoned that Linette, as a foreigner, was a social and political liability.

For a time, Linette sought to appeal to her husband's affections. But when this failed she devoted her efforts to getting out of Russia, where she no longer had friends or roots, and rejoining her mother in Paris. Whenever we saw her she assured us that exit visas would soon be issued to herself and the two boys, that she had talked to a very

important person who had promised to assist her, and that her husband, anxious to get rid of her, would help.

One day, not having seen Linette for months, we phoned her. A frightened voice on the other end told us she no longer lived there. Soon we had confirmation that Linette had been arrested and the boys were in the care of the state.

By then Prokofiev was completely immersed in his own troubles. His opera, *Tale of a Real Man*, about a Soviet war hero, on which he had pinned his hopes of a comeback, had been given in Leningrad in concert form.

The party press had howled condemnation: "A typical recurrence of formalism." Even the hapless conductor who had played the score on his own responsibility was criticized. Croaked the *Literary Gazette*: "Evidently the composer (Prokofiev) has not drawn his own conclusions from the historic party decree and continues to advocate modernistic dissonant music incapable of expressing the spiritual world of a Soviet man and merely botching a big patriotic subject."

After this compounded failure, Prokofiev virtually withdrew from the world. The gay, witty, gregarious, and perennially boyish Prokofiev we once had known became a morose, sulky, frustrated, and broken man. He virtually gave up composing in the realization that he was temperamentally unsuited to piping the party line and, unlike the younger Shostakovitch, too set in his ways to readapt himself.

Glier, in the meantime, prospered. With the musical giants in temporary or permanent eclipse, there was room at the top for mediocrity. And when next the Stalin Prizes in music were handed out, one came his way. Perhaps this

enabled him to fix the ceiling of the living room, though we do not know for sure. When we left Moscow after more than three years, we were still waiting for him to call and return our suitcase.

5

WHEN Eric A. Johnston, American "movie czar," came to Moscow in 1948, he asked to see a Soviet motion picture studio. His request was granted, though it put the Soviet Cineministry to considerable trouble.

In order not to "land with one's face in the mud," as the Russian saying goes, before this foreign visitor, hasty preparations were made to galvanize an idle studio lot into a semblance of activity. Actors, cameramen, and incidental personnel were mobilized for the occasion, together with the necessary props. However, Mr. Johnston's practiced eye was not entirely deceived. Subsequently, the story made the rounds of Moscow literary and theatrical society.

This does not mean that the Soviet motion picture industry, which in the past has given the world some of its finest films, is at a total standstill or has lost its touch. Some recent pictures like *The Stone Flower* with its charming folklore and beautiful color photography, or the screen version of Alexander Fadeyev's *Young Guard*, with its splendid cast of youthful actors, testify to reserves of acting and directorial talent as well as to technical competence. Even the

more numerous "documentaries" and propaganda "quickies" have their fine points.

Nevertheless, ever since 1946, the Soviet film industry, for all its possibilities, has been running in low gear. Then it was that the new party ideology requirements in all cultural fields descended on the film industry in the form of a party decree scrapping several newly completed films.

Nowhere has the new propaganda straitjacket proved as cramping as in the Soviet film world, perhaps because the process of making a picture is more complex than that of publishing a book or even producing a play on the stage.

Besides its own specific troubles, the film industry also is affected by the handicaps and restrictions placed upon the writer, playwright, and composer, who provide the scenarios and incidental music.

Shortage of suitable subject matter is the initial bottleneck in film production. Before any plot or theme can serve as vehicle for a motion picture, it must survive a long gantlet of party and government scrutiny, usually first in manuscript form, then in book form, then as a stage play, and finally as scenario. And at every examination there are good chances of its being rejected.

Nor does approval on one day guarantee survival on the morrow. Somewhere along the line radical revisions are sure to be required. Thus large are the odds against the seed of any idea reaching final fruition on the screen. Nor does this end the hazards. A completed picture must clear the highest hurdle of all before it is released for general exhibition. The screen, so to speak, is at the end of a long party line.

The party "offensive" on the film "front" began four years ago with the scrapping of the completed film, *Great Life*,

depicting post-war reconstruction in the Donbas coal-pits. The main reason given for this step was that the picture showed Soviet mining methods on a low manual, as opposed to a highly mechanized, level.

Prior to this, the picture had been given glowing advance notices. According to prevailing reports, it had earned the enthusiastic approval of all judges up to a Kremlin preview attended by Prime Minister Joseph Stalin. Afterward, the generalissimo, who prides himself on terseness, merely asked: "How much did the picture cost to produce?" "Three million rubles," came the answer. "Money down the drain," was Stalin's only comment.

Other major casualties of the "offensive" included the film *Ivan the Terrible* (Part Two) and Sergei Eisenstein, greatest of Russian film directors, who devoted the last years of his life to this picture. It was scrapped for giving too "negative" a characterization of Ivan, with not enough emphasis on his "positive" role in consolidating and expanding the Muscovite state, in line with the new interpretation of history.

Again the ultimate judge was Stalin. Eisenstein never got over that blow. As a final cup of bitterness, he was forced to join the chorused denunciation of the American motion picture industry, for which he had high regard.

Because of the many pictures either scrapped in production or before final release, added to the initial dearth of approved scenarios, the ambitious plans and projects, outlined by the Cineministry at the outset of each year, simmer down before the year is out. With every failure somebody gets it in the neck, usually the director or scenario writer. Then, at the year's end, their cumulative impact descends on Cineminister Ivan Bolshakov for failing to fulfill his

plan. Bolshakov promises to do better next year. Gradually output increases, but it is a slow, distressing process.

The film distribution organizations and motion picture houses also have their respective plans to fulfill. Since the universal introduction of cost accounts and elimination of subsidies, this has assumed vital importance for them. Hence, in the face of a shortage of Soviet films, the pressure for stopgaps to keep the houses operating.

The result has been a veritable flood of captured prewar and wartime German films, all of them mediocre, some of them utter trash, including a few with Nazi propaganda slants against the Western powers which happen to fit the present party line. But, whatever their quality, these pictures are at least a respite from party propaganda "documentaries" and therefore draw crowded houses.

The urgent need for stopgaps even led the Soviet Cineministry to flirt with the idea of importing some American films and to talk business tentatively with Mr. Johnston when he visited Moscow. An agreement was made stipulating that the Russians would select twenty-five titles for consideration from a list of one hundred which Mr. Johnston would submit.

Mr. Johnston's eastern European representative, Kanturek, flew to Moscow with the films. For a solid month he was kept busy displaying his samples at private showings in the Cineministry. The small auditorium was invariably packed with people who looked to Kanturek like high government officials, sometimes with their wives. Though they appeared to enjoy the shows, he never knew for sure, as nobody ever expressed an opinion to him afterward.

Having shown his twenty-fifth picture, Kanturek packed

his equipment and got his exit visa. That, presumably, is where the matter rested. Presumably the Party Propaganda and Agitation Department, having denounced Hollywood as a purveyor of poison, refused to permit the Cineministry to administer this poison to Soviet moviegoers even in small doses.

Charlie Chaplin, almost alone of all the American galaxy of screen stars, commands warm official Soviet approval. Nevertheless, there is one Chaplin film that never has been released for public demonstration—his masterpiece, *The Great Dictator*.

6

CHARGES that many leading Soviet painters in their quest for realism in art have lapsed into "naturalism" were voiced in the Communist youth paper, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*.

The writer of the article in question, Victor Sazhin, described as a construction engineer, has no use whatever for the exaggeration and abstractionism of what he terms "decadent" modernist art. But he regards naturalism—realism or the "literal transcription of reality"—as an equally serious danger.

Pictures which merely seek to copy nature with photographic precision, Mr. Sazhin contends, are devoid of intellectual content. The realist painter must first and foremost express thought whereas naturalism does not.

Art must have thought, says Mr. Sazhin. True art, he adds, always exaggerates reality to some degree in order to drive home its message.

Among those whom Mr. Sazhin criticizes for naturalist tendencies are such outstanding figures of the Soviet art world as the Gerasimov brothers, Igo Grabar, Yefanov, Karpov, and Yakovlev. To portray childhood, writes Mr. Sazhin, is to portray the country's future.

But artist Yefanov, in his canvas, *Happy Childhood*, simply paints a pretty little girl with a smile, "whose whole happiness" consists in the fact that she is pretty and is smiling.

"The author did not trouble himself to find a convincing realistic form, one that disclosed the happiness of our children," says Mr. Sazhin. "Soviet children suffered much during the grim war. Many lost their homes and parents. But they have a mother, the socialist motherland; they have a big future, and they are truly happy because their happiness was born in the struggle for life, for the future, for the motherland.

"And this happiness should be sought primarily in the soul and heart of the child. This was just what Yefanov failed to understand and feel. He painted not so much 'Happy Childhood' as 'Comfortable Childhood.'"

No more successful, in Mr. Sazhin's opinion, is S. Gerasimov's attempt to present the triumphant homecoming of the war-scarred hero in his canvas, *Son's Return*.

He declares that the dandified little officer in the picture is more like a mamma's boy who never smelled powder than a soldier who had endured the trials of battle, and that the landscape is far too stereotyped to convey the happiness and emotion of the occasion.

Mr. Sazhin approves the fact that the figures of Lenin and Prime Minister Stalin loom large in Soviet painting. But he adds that save for Alexander Gerasimov's canvases, *Lenin on the Tribune* and *Stalin at the Sixteenth Party Congress*, no genuine portraits of the two great revolutionary leaders have yet been produced.

Many attempts along these lines he describes as downright failures, adding that some artists tackled their subjects frivolously, without awareness of their responsibility to the people. For example, he declares, Grabar's *Stalin in Exile at Solovychegodsk* is "amazing in its primitiveness and amateurishness," and adds that "everything about it is bad."

And Mr. Sazhin wonders how it could happen that a great artist "whose art embodies the best traditions of the old Russian and Western masters could paint such a picture."

Mr. Sazhin charges painter Boris Karpov with "utter irresponsibility" in his portraits of Prime Minister Stalin. Although Mr. Karpov has made many such paintings, they are, comments Mr. Sazhin, no more than variations of one and the same portrait.

He adds that Mr. Karpov has not improved matters by placing a rural landscape in the background of some of his latest versions—that his painting was still listless.

Mr. Sazhin stresses that Soviet painting should not confine itself to portrayal of the present, but should look ahead to the future now building. But he complains that efforts at this have so far fallen short of success.

As an example he cites Alexander Gerasimov's picture, *Rye*, and pronounces it inferior to the famous canvas painted fifty years earlier by Shishkin on the same subject, despite the fact that the intervening period had included such events

as the October Revolution and the establishment of a new state and a new kind of man.

Alexander Gerasimov, he comments, could not have felt "the full strength and beauty of labor of the new man, of the new peasant—the collective farmer . . . This is more than just rye. It is the power of the people, it is the people's happiness."

The worst offender in the direction of naturalism, according to Mr. Sazhin, is the painter Yakovlev, whom he describes as a slave of nature who at the same time distorts nature by undue emphasis on nonessential details which distract the beholder's eye from the main subject. And he adds that Mr. Yakovlev has companions and disciples.

Mr. Sazhin also has some harsh words for the art critics. He contends that often the critic, instead of bluntly and honestly pointing out defects to the artist, praises his work out of all proportion to its merits.

"Praise of feeble, immature works of artists has become a matter of habit with our art critics," he says.

And he describes how a critic by the name of Zamoshkin "jumped out of his skin" in his praises of the aforementioned Alexander Gerasimov canvas *Rye*:

"We cannot agree with A. Zamoshkin, who pathetically exclaims that from A. Gerasimov's land you'll 'go forth to life, to labor, to festivities, and to death.'"

"That," comments Mr. Sazhin, "isn't criticism—it's flattery, servile toadying!" and he adds that "the toothlessness of our art criticism is one reason why art lags."

In conclusion, he quotes from Zhdanov's report on literature: "Only bold and open criticism helps our people to improve themselves, impels them to go forward, to overcome the shortcomings in their work."

In publishing Mr. Sazhin's article, the editors appended a footnote to the effect that the author is concerned with analyzing certain grave shortcomings in contemporary painting and consequently does not touch upon numerous positive achievements in painting as well as in engraving and sculpture.

7

SOVIET ARCHITECTURE has followed music, literature and biology as the object of a mighty blast of criticism. A large number of distinguished architects have been accused of succumbing "to formalism, idealism and other foreign bourgeois influences."

A. Vlasov, acting member of the Academy of Architecture of the U.S.S.R. and chief architect of Kiev, launched the attack in a nine-column article appearing in *Pravda*. It was entitled *Ripe Questions of Soviet Architecture*.

Mr. Vlasov's shafts were directed particularly against the Committee on Architecture and the Union of Architects.

While praising such achievements of Soviet architecture as the Moscow subway stations, the Moscow canal, the All-Union Agricultural Exposition, certain public buildings, and housing developments in many parts of the Soviet Union, Mr. Vlasov charges many of his colleagues have not lived up to their responsibility.

Notably he accused the Academy of Architecture with

failing to direct "the theoretical front" and with failing to advance architectural science.

As an example of this theoretical lag, Mr. Vlasov charged that a treatise on city building published by the academy describes the layout of certain famous capitalist cities while ignoring their slums.

Mr. Vlasov added that while the academy advertised the reconstruction plans of capitalist cities, it did not mention that a hundred and thirty-five such plans in the United States have been pigeonholed.

He concluded by "charging that the authors of the work imbue our architectural youth with nonsensical, absurd notions that 'garden cities' for workers can be built under conditions of capitalism."

The whole book smacked of "slavish toadying to the architecture of capitalist countries," according to Mr. Vlasov.

The critic found other evidences of a political approach, of bourgeois objectivism, of formalism and idealism among his colleagues' work and attitudes. He cited the view of Ivan Zholtovsky that "beauty is above society."

This, Mr. Vlasov charged, led to pseudo-parthenons instead of modern buildings; it led to a design for Stalingrad in the form of a medieval fortress and again to a project for rebuilding the center of the ancient Russian town of Kaluga in the shape of an ancient Roman forum.

In like manner Mr. Vlasov attacked the literal recourse by some architects to classic forms of Russian architecture, which he said resulted in cluttering up the facades of housing projects with anomalous columns. At the same time, he inveighed against what he described as the "box style" of over-simplification.

While favoring the incorporation of folk motifs in archi-

ture, Mr. Vlasov stressed the need of intelligent adaptation and deplored "the vulgar interpretation of popular art," which he said designs houses for collective farmers in the spirit of old-time Ukrainian or north Russian peasant huts of the sixteenth century.

After chiding both the union of architects and the government committee on architecture for disliking discussion and criticism, Mr. Vlasov called upon his colleagues to be more self-critical and concludes:

"We must honestly and frankly uncover serious distortions in the theory and practice of architecture, decisively and rapidly eradicate them, thus confidently advancing Soviet architecture along the road indicated by the party and the government."

XVI THE INTERNAL PROPAGANDA LINE

I

"THE CAPITULATIONIST Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc was unmasked as an anti-Soviet bloc, and the capitulators of the Right as agents of the kulak . . . The capitulationist Trotskyite . . ."

By now I was wide awake. Though my watch said only six-thirty, the bright May early morning sunshine already flooded the room.

The voice of our eleven-year-old son droned on through the open door:

"The capitulationist . . ."

"Hey, there," I shouted, "why don't you turn over the record, or, better still, turn it off?"

"But, Pa, we have party history first thing in the morning today, and unless I can repeat the text the teacher will be terribly angry. The capitulationist Trotskyite . . ."

"Party history" is a required subject in the Soviet Union from the fourth grade onward. And everyone in the Soviet Union, from child to graybeard, uses the same textbook: *The History of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the U.S.S.R.—Shorter Course*.

More than fifteen million copies of this have been printed

in every language of the Soviet Union and in all important world languages.

The *Shorter Course* appeared first in 1938. The flyleaf carried no author's name, but simply the note that it was prepared by a special commission of the Communist Party Central Committee and was approved by the latter.

Last year, hailing the tenth anniversary of the publication of this momentous work, the Soviet press let it be known that it, like so many other remarkable things, was the product of Stalin's genius.

The *Shorter Course* is the official, authoritative history of the Bolshevik movement. Its every phrase, word and punctuation mark have been literally weighed in an apothecary's scale and scrutinized under a microscope, and are guaranteed one hundred per cent deviation-proof. For party members and Soviet citizens this is the distilled essence of wisdom beyond all question or debate.

The *Shorter Course* purports to trace the development of the Russian revolutionary movement from its inception. The pictures it presents are highly unflattering to Stalin's political rivals; it gives the impression that most of Lenin's chief lieutenants were traitors and *agents provocateurs*, the main villain of the piece being Leon Trotsky. Stalin, by contrast, emerges as Lenin's closest and most trusted disciple.

The *Shorter Course* is so universally studied by young and old because it is the only authoritative textbook on party history. Writers of lesser weight than Stalin are in constant danger of deviation.

Since the war, the *Shorter Course* has been supplemented by the appearance of Stalin's *Collected Works*, of which twelve volumes have been published so far, with more to

come. Here the reader will find the materials of the *Shorter Course* amplified and documented.

The third volume, covering the revolutionary period of 1917, makes Stalin's contribution to the Bolshevik triumph appear hardly less than that of Lenin's. The two men emerge as virtually equal partners, and Stalin as the one who actually planned and prepared the October, 1917, uprising that carried the Bolsheviks to power while Lenin was in hiding. The biographical chronology at the back of the book contains the following illuminating entries:

"October 24—Lenin arrives at Smolny in the evening. Stalin briefs him on the course of political events.

"October 24-25—Lenin and Stalin lead the October armed uprising."

All this is a far cry from the days when Stalin claimed to be nothing more than the humble pupil of the great revolutionary teacher, Lenin.

Rewriting of history in the interest of the party line is not confined to the *Shorter Course*. The whole of Russia's past, among other things, is being realigned to back up Kremlin policy.

The entire expansionist policy of czarism, the subjugation of non-Russian peoples in Asia and Europe by an empire which Lenin described as a "prison of peoples," is approved now as a "progressive" development. Some current authors even write nostalgically about the Russian colonization of Alaska.

By far the most astonishing revision of history relates to the recent world war, astonishing because the events revised still are fresh in the memory of millions. Yet a man from Mars, landing today in Russia with no foreknowledge of earthly affairs, would gain the impression from much

of the current Soviet literature, that the Soviet Union, fighting singlehanded, defeated a capitalist coalition of Germany, Japan, and Italy, backed by the United States and Britain.

The outcome of the war is now invariably acclaimed as a Communist victory over world capitalism. The role of the Western powers in the defeat of Germany is completely discounted. The West is portrayed as deliberately stalling on the opening of a second front while secretly aiding the Nazis.

For example, Colonel Christov, writing in the army paper *Red Star*, describes the effects of Anglo-American bombing on the German war potential as nil, and concludes, "Only the heroic struggle of the Soviet armed forces, which fought Fascist Germany singlehanded and were able by themselves without any outside help to completely smash the Hitler war machine and liberate Europe from the German Fascist invaders, compelled the ruling circles of the West to hasten the debarkation of forces in France."

The further inference is drawn that the main objective of the landings was less to defeat the Germans than to forestall this complete "liberation" of western Europe by the Soviets.

In a *Literary Gazette* piece titled *General Bradley—War-monger*, Boris Levrenyev writes:

"After breaching the mythical 'Atlantic Wall,' Bradley's troops raced ahead, opposed only by meager German units which had no hope of reinforcement because the Germans, routed by the Soviet offensive in the East, were in no position to send reserves to the West."

Another writer on military affairs, Major General Zamiatin, in a lecture on the Soviet offensive of January, 1945,

ascribes the German break-through in the Ardennes to the inactivity of the Anglo-American forces, who were in no hurry to wind up the war.

He implies that if it had not been for the launching of the Soviet January offensive, the Germans would have reached Antwerp.

Revision of the war's history proceeds by stages.

Having written off the part of the Western powers in defeating Germany, Soviet historians are building up the Soviet Union's brief participation in the Pacific War as the decisive factor in beating Japan.

Far from agreeing that the atom bomb hastened the Japanese surrender, the Soviets belittle the military effect of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki blasts, while playing them up as atrocities.

According to one *Pravda* explanation, the atom bomb blasts were intended mainly to frighten the U.S.S.R. The Western powers, says the author, were impelled to this step by rage and chagrin over the swift Soviet victory over Germany. Concludes *Pravda*: "This was the first test of the most hideous weapon which the murderers intended should frighten the whole world."

2

THE SOVIET PRACTICE of doctoring facts to fit the party line is not confined to history. Truth, falsehood, good and evil, right and wrong, theories, beliefs, and personalities—

in all spheres, climes or ages—are judged solely by whether they serve or hinder the Communist purpose.

A year ago, the newspaper *Evening Moscow*, reviewing a Russian edition of one of Upton Sinclair's recent novels, wrote:

"We know Upton Sinclair as one of the most honest, righteous and scrupulous of writers."

Six months later, the *Literary Gazette* declared:

"Upton Sinclair has long been known as a careerist and literary racketeer."

The total turnabout in the Soviet estimate of Mr. Sinclair's literary integrity was caused not by any new book of his, but by his support of the Atlantic Pact. Had he instead chosen to support one of the various Soviet-sponsored "peace congresses," he still would be hailed as "scrupulous."

This over-all party-line approach to everything was prescribed for his followers long ago by Lenin. Deriding the belief in absolute standards of good and evil as a capitalist "humbug," the founder of the Soviet state declared that every human society devises its own moral code.

He told the youthful delegates to the Third Congress of the Soviet Young Communist League, for their guidance: "Morality is all that promotes the destruction of the old exploiter society and the unification of all laborers around the proletariat which is creating the new society of Communists."

Lenin's attitude on morals follows from the premises of his materialist philosophy, set forth in his treatise, *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*, in which he stated:

"Materialism admits in general the existence of objective reality (matter) independent of consciousness, sensations, experience . . . Consciousness . . . is solely the reflection of

being, at best a reflection that is approximately correct."

Further, he added: "Matter is the thing that, acting on our sensory organs, produces sensations; matter is objective reality . . . Matter, nature, being, are the prior data, while spirit, consciousness, sensation, the psychic, are the secondary data."

From this it logically follows that human consciousness, being derived from and dependent upon inanimate matter, cannot establish any independent, absolute spiritual values.

Stalin, who has a knack for oversimplifying Lenin's philosophical abstractions in practical terms, wrote in *Problems of Leninism*: "Whatever the nature of society, whatever its material conditions, such are its ideas, theories, political views."

Paradoxically, Lenin, for all his materialism and denial of moral standards, had a boundless, idealistic faith in the perfectability of man and human institutions and endowed his unthinking material universe with an essentially rational character. Therein lies the major philosophic contradiction of the whole Communist position.

Lenin believed not only in a matter that "moved," but also in one that was able to "think."

In this picture, which Marx and Engels first developed and Lenin elaborated, matter—or nature—including human society, moves irresistibly from lower toward higher forms of organization. This is essentially the nineteenth century concept of progress—motion forward toward something better, as opposed to reaction—motion backward toward something worse. Neither Marx nor Lenin troubled with the following question: How, without fixed standards of good and bad, is one to judge what is better and what is worse, whether the motion is forward or backward?

In explaining how this progressive motion operated, Marx and Lenin also borrowed from nineteenth century idealism, adapting to their system the "dialectic" process of thesis-antithesis-synthesis developed by the German philosopher Hegel. With Hegel, the process was consciously directed toward the perfection of an absolute idea that was also the supreme reality.

Lenin, too, had his goal of perfection. Applied to human society, the law of development from a lower to a higher form was construed as meaning that in the current stage capitalism must of historic necessity be replaced by communism.

Commenting on this "discovery" in the party history, *Shorter Course*, Stalin writes: "Socialism (communism) from being a dream of a better future for mankind, became a science."

This ingenious combination of philosophy and wishful thinking is a decisive factor in shaping Kremlin policy today. The concept of "historic necessity" accounts for such statements as the Molotov assertion that today "all roads lead to communism."

A more analytical approach to their philosophic assumptions might help Soviet leaders realize that communism has no monopoly claim on "historic necessity." Thirty years ago, Oswald Spengler invoked the same concept to justify the expansional dreams of the Kaiser.

More recently, it cloaked Hitler's dream of world conquest and prompted his boast that the history of Europe had been decided for the next thousand years. Even Mussolini proclaimed his "century of Fascism." And dictators and conquerors from Alexander to Napoleon have identified themselves with destiny.

As for Lenin's statement that everything that promotes communism is moral, the present Soviet leadership has used it as *carte blanche* to justify everything in the name of the cause. Hence, the right to withhold or distort the truth; hence, the right to make or break agreements, to subject its own and alien peoples to the most absolute and ruthless rule the world has yet seen.

In the final analysis, this materialist denial of intrinsic moral standards and spiritual values does away with everything save the formula that "might makes right" and save naked power, exalted as an end in itself. The clearest illustration of this outcome is the present Soviet police state.

This is a far cry from Lenin's belief in Marx's prediction that under communism the state would "wither away."

3

THE OVER-ALL Soviet practice of doctoring facts to fit the party line determines the nature of Soviet news coverage.

The Communists frankly regard the press not as a means for disseminating information but as a propaganda weapon. The resulting tendentiousness is most apparent in Soviet coverage of major world stories.

President Truman's announcement that there was evidence of an atomic explosion in Russia was totally ignored by the Soviet press. Two days later, when the official Tass agency issued its statement on the subject, the Soviet press

gave its readers to understand that Tass had taken the world completely by surprise. The comic weekly *Krokodil* even carried a cartoon showing President Truman's amazement on hearing the Tass statement.

To this day, the Soviet press never once has referred to the German surrender to SHAEF at Rheims, May 8, 1945, that terminated hostilities in Europe. It always has treated the pageant staged at Potsdam as the real thing and observed May 9 as V-E Day.

The Soviet reading public never was actually told about the Berlin blockade. Soviet press reports from the German capital conveyed the impression that the Western powers were attempting to shackle the city's economy and starve its inhabitants by deliberately refusing generous Soviet offers to supply the city, while operating a "so-called air bridge" as a publicity and airline "money-making" stunt which proved a dismal failure.

The eventual Berlin settlement was served up as a brilliant triumph for Soviet policy which had forced the Western powers to back down.

The Berlin rail strike a year ago was treated as a "*provocation*" engineered by a small number of troublemakers with the connivance of the Western authorities against the overwhelming opposition of the rank-and-file railway employees.

Never have the questions of atomic control been presented squarely to the Soviet public.

Foreign Minister Andrei Y. Vishinsky always is acclaimed in the Soviet press as the sole proponent of a genuine international agreement.

The United States, by contrast, is pictured as seeking to establish an atom monopoly for its own benefit.

Soviet refusal to admit effective international inspection of atomic activities in Russia, which is at the crux of the present impasse, has never been mentioned.

The process of sifting and slanting the news for publication is both minute and cumbersome.

Stories that bear upon some major aspect of Soviet policy are cleared with the highest party authorities. As this takes time, publication of some of the biggest events often is held up for several days, perhaps indefinitely.

Meantime, *Pravda*, the Soviet Communist party newspaper, has no fear of being scooped by *Izvestia*, the Soviet Government organ—or vice versa.

After following the Soviet press day by day for a number of years, one feels qualified to formulate some of the directives behind Soviet news policy:

1. Never print anything that reflects the slightest credit on the West, especially the United States.

2. Play up everything unfavorable to the West. Depict the West as in the throes of economic and political disintegration and chaos. Stress that the Marshall Plan is a fiendish device to bleed Europe for American benefit.

3. Picture the United States as about to plunge into a major depression (the Soviet press has kept America tottering on the brink for the past three years). Describe American living standards as deteriorating, with most of the population below subsistence levels. Show race prejudice and violence on the increase (play up every lynching, using photographs when possible), vice and crime rampant.

4. Expose the United States Government as a criminal Wall Street clique intent on plotting aggressive war against the Soviet Union and other "peace-loving" peoples. Describe

the average United States citizen as good-natured, but ignorant and poverty-stricken, downtrodden, and duped by his rulers.

Consonant with this coverage policy, not one word has ever appeared in the Soviet press on American postwar progress in industry, labor relations, racial tolerance, or any other field.

The calling of major strikes always is reported, but never their settlement. Increases in unemployment are given, but never drops. Rises in prices are given, but never wage increases or price cuts.

While the Soviet press misses no opportunity to publicize discrimination against Negroes in America, it carefully avoided publicizing that Dr. Ralph Bunche, the United States mediator in Palestine, was an American Negro.

In fact, Dr. Bunche and his activities had no press at all in the Soviet Union until he turned down the offer of a post as assistant secretary of state. Thereupon, the Soviet press made much of his refusal and his criticisms of the color bar in Washington without, however, troubling to elaborate on his previous role and position.

Incidentally, during the Palestine armistice negotiations, the Soviet press maintained that British and American efforts, far from being directed toward a peaceful settlement, were seeking to perpetuate the conflict. The progress made and the terms of eventual settlements were not reported. As far as Soviet readers know, the war in Palestine may still be going on.

In dealing with Germany, the Soviet press, having passed over the Berlin blockade, pictures the Western zone as economically prostrate and politically bankrupt. The inhabit-

ants are shown as casting envious eyes at the fortunate brothers in the East zone with their "democratic" government.

The Western occupation authorities are seen by Soviet readers as intent primarily on reviving Nazism and converting West Germany into a springboard for attack on the Soviet Union. In accordance with this line since the Nuremberg trials, the Soviet press has failed to report convictions of Nazi war criminals in the West, although it has made much of cases of undue leniency, as with Ilse Koch.

Soviet press coverage of foreign news supports, down to the smallest detail, the official Soviet attitude and justifies Soviet policy. This does not mean that all material transmitted from abroad by Tass or other Soviet correspondents is as totally one-sided as what is published in the press.

In the Soviet Union news is a government monopoly, and Soviet foreign correspondents are primarily Soviet government employees in a highly trusted category, who gather news and information not primarily for the benefit of the public at large, but for the government. Top Soviet and party officials receive a daily Tass news letter.

This primary function of Soviet correspondents as gatherers of confidential information for the Soviet government is possibly one reason the Soviets tend to classify all foreign correspondents as spies.

THE OFFICIAL Soviet news agency, *Tass*, maintains, in addition to its extensive foreign news service, a monopoly on domestic news and provides the entire provincial press, Russian and non-Russian, with ready-made editorials and feature articles.

Local editors as a rule prefer to fill their four-page sheets with this certified, prefabricated material rather than take editorial risks on their own. This has resulted in a high degree of standardization of the press throughout the country and an almost total fade-out of local news and color.

It is almost impossible to learn what is happening, say, in Tbilisi or Ashkhabad by reading the local papers from those places. Practically everything in them duplicates what previously appeared in the Moscow press.

The only two papers that have managed to retain a shred of individual journalism amidst this conformity are the Soviet Union's two evening papers, *Evening Moscow* and *Evening Leningrad*. In them the reader, surfeited with ideology, may sometimes relax over a story about the animal world or a rapturous description of scenic beauty along the Volga.

Sensationalism and scandal are totally foreign to the Soviet press, as is "society news" or any reporting on the personal lives of the great and near-great.

There are no rotogravure sections, women's pages, comics, or other frivolities, except that once a week, on Saturdays,

the aforementioned evening papers carry half a page of jokes, games and puzzles, including a crossword puzzle.

The model of all serious Soviet journalism is *Pravda*, central organ of the Communist party. Like all Soviet newspapers, it consists of four pages, divided into six columns each. Readers generally pass over the first page and turn first to the back page, where world news is printed.

With so many speeches by Soviet spokesmen in the United Nations and elsewhere to be reported in full (barring slight editing for home consumption) and the Communist-sponsored "peace movement" requiring constant coverage, not to mention the succession of eastern European treason trials, the world news nowadays spills over onto the inside pages, encroaching on reports of Soviet cultural and economic achievements.

Practically every day on the Soviet calendar is the anniversary of some historic event, which is duly commemorated in an article by a *Pravda* staff writer. Articles on a wide range of political and cultural subjects also appear from time to time as space permits.

Pravda also acts as pacesetter for various drives for economic objectives whereby the Soviets try to keep things humming.

In this connection, much of the front page usually is taken up with letters and messages to Prime Minister Joseph Stalin from groups of workers or collective farmers pledging themselves to increase the output of steel, the yield of wheat per acre, or the number of liters of milk per cow, as the case may be.

As a significant addition to *Pravda*'s front page make-up, column six now has been set aside for news of socialist construction in the "brotherly" countries.

Here, under a Bucharest dateline, one may read that the first week in November was set aside as "Soviet-Roumanian friendship week" and that six million Soviet books have been published in Roumania.

A Shanghai item announces that a group of Soviet cameramen is shooting a documentary titled *Establishment of New Democracy in China*. This column has been copied by other Soviet papers far and wide.

Columns one and two are reserved for editorials, mostly on home subjects, but occasionally on world politics when the party has some special blast to deliver, such as a stinging denunciation of Marshal Tito.

During election campaigns, three quarters of the paper's space is devoted to plugging the party line and reporting campaign speeches and rallies.

An unique journalistic function is performed at present by the *Literary Gazette*. Originally, the trade organ of the Writers' Union, it now has become, "in the words of its editors, "a fiery propagandist for the great ideas of communism."

Specifically, because of its "non-official" status, the *Literary Gazette* is used for much of the rougher propaganda hatchet work. It serves as an outlet for materials whose dubious authenticity and libelous character might embarrass the official government or party organs.

A scurrilous article on President Truman by Soviet writer Boris Gorbatoev elicited an official protest to Viachislav M. Molotov by the American Ambassador. Mr. Molotov's pat answer was that his government was not responsible for the writings of the *Literary Gazette*.

An even more virulent *Literary Gazette* piece on Presi-

dent Dutra of Brazil led to severance of diplomatic relations when the Brazilians refused to accept any subterfuge.

More recently, the *Literary Gazette* outdid all other Soviet publications in the anti-Tito campaign by asserting that back in 1941 Marshal Tito had offered to lay down his arms provided Hitler made him head of a Yugoslav quisling regime.

In like manner, whenever the Soviets wish to say something particularly derogatory about the government of Finland, with whom they are linked by a friendship and mutual aid treaty, the piece appears in the *Literary Gazette*.

On the home front, the *Literary Gazette* has been in the van of the recent campaign against the "cosmopolites"—those intellectuals who ventured to question Russian priority in all cultural fields, many of whom, it so happened, were Jewish.

Last year, in this connection, the editors jointly congratulated themselves on having "done quite a bit to unmask the toadies to the taskmasters of Wall Street lackey culture." A few weeks later these same editors were sternly upbraided by *Culture and Life* for writing reviews of each other's mediocre works in a spirit of sycophancy and mutual admiration. The editors readily concurred editorially, and promised never to do it again.

When *Culture and Life*, organ of the Communist Party Committee on Propaganda and Agitation, passes judgment, its authority is so complete and final that everyone choruses agreement, including the author whose work or reputation has just been annihilated.

Quite often, its Jove-like pronouncements come like a bolt from the blue after a novel or play has been praised lavishly by the *Literary Gazette* and other publications.

Many is the stage production scrapped on the eve of its opening because of a *Culture and Life* "thumbs down."

Soviet authors and playwrights in particular await the appearance of this formidable paper every ten days with fear and trepidation. There is a Moscow jibe that among writers the customary greeting, "How's life?" has been amended to "How's *Culture and Life*?"

XVII

RUSSIAN CLAIMS TO "FIRSTS"

THE PARTY not only directs Soviet natural science but jealously guards it from corrosive contact with the bourgeois West.

Under the recent law regulating contacts between all Soviet organizations and the outside world, Soviet natural scientists may have no foreign professional dealings save through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In practice, this means that Soviet biologists, physicists, engineers, or physicians can no longer correspond with their colleagues abroad on professional matters, or even subscribe to and receive foreign periodicals, save through the channels of the Soviet Foreign Office. The cumbersome bureaucratic procedure this involves is in itself a sufficient deterrent in most instances.

This deliberate policy of scientific isolation is a radical departure from prewar practice. Then the Soviets seemed to hold with the rest of the world that such contacts and exchanges on a scientific, non-political plane served to advance the common fund of human knowledge and thereby benefit all mankind.

Accordingly, world congresses of natural scientists in various fields often were held in the Soviet Union. World specialists were invited to work in Soviet institutions and were elected to honorary membership in the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Distinguished Soviet natural scientists, in their turn, were authorized to work and lecture abroad, to become

honorary members of foreign academies and learned societies. They were free to correspond with their foreign colleagues and to publish articles and papers in foreign periodicals.

Today, such fraternization is frowned up on as "unpatriotic." The theme of the Soviet scientist who deliberately or unwillingly makes the fruits of Soviet research available abroad is the vehicle for numerous current ideological plays and motion pictures. The claim now is that any knowledge whatsoever that leaks to the West will be turned against the Soviet Union by the capitalist "warmongers."

The present restrictions apply as much to fields where no conceivable element of military security is involved. For the current argument runs that there can be no such thing as world science as long as the world is split into hostile capitalist and Communist camps. There will be world science only when the world is united—under the banner of communism. Meanwhile, no hands across the barricades.

This stand fully dovetails with another current party-line claim—namely, that a majority, if not all, of the world's great discoveries and inventions belong by rights to Russians. The circumstance that most of these Russian inventors and discoverers were born to blossom unseen is ascribed partly to the corruption of czarist officials "who sold the country's riches retail and wholesale to foreign capitalists" and partly to a deliberate conspiracy of silence against the Russian people, engineered by unscrupulous foreigners.

Intones the Soviet magazine *Literary Gazette*: "The Italian Marconi shamelessly appropriated the radio invented by the Russian scientist Popov. The German Siemens literally stole the blueprints for the telegraph from Yakobi (Morse isn't mentioned). The Wright brothers usurped the glory

of Mozhaisky (credited with flying his airplane near St. Petersburg twenty years before the event at Kitty Hawk)."

Continuing the list: Yablochkov, not Edison, invented the electric light bulb, which originally was known as "Russian Light." Tsiolkovsky, another Russian, fathered rocket propulsion. His fellow countryman Polzunov built a steam-driven locomotive well ahead of Stephenson.

Another Russian beat Robert Fulton to building the first steamboat. The first submarine floated (and sank) in Russia early in the nineteenth century. Back in the 1850s what is described as "a wonderful machine" is said to have made its appearance in the countryside near Saratov. This was the first tractor, pioneered by a Russian named Blinov, long ahead of anybody else.

The invention of the rolling process for production of armor-plate is credited to the Russian workman Vasili Pyatov back in the 1860s, "but corrupt czarist officials who kowtowed to everything foreign callously transmitted this Russian invention to foreign concerns which subsequently sold it to the czarist government as an 'English' invention."

Other Russian "firsts" now include: The law of the conservation of mass, wrongly attributed to the Frenchman Lavoisier, who actually pirated the idea from the Russian Lomonosov; the balloon, unjustly credited to the French brothers Montgolfier, whereas the balloon first went up near Nizhni Novgorod at a much earlier date; the internal combustion engine, the tank, television, synthetic rubber, the helicopter, penicillin, and a host of others.

The bicycle is the latest addition to the lengthening list of inventions for which Russian priority is being claimed by Soviet propagandists.

Construction of the first two-wheeled pedal-driven contrivance is credited by Moscow papers to one Artomonov, described as a self-taught inventor in the Urals.

Artomonov is reported to have accomplished his feat in 1801 and to have pedaled the entire distance of more than a thousand miles from Nizhni Tagil in the Urals to Moscow.

Until the recent discovery of Artomonov's venerable vehicle, the Soviet press states, the German Dreys, who constructed a wooden push bike in 1813, was commonly considered the inventor of the bicycle.

Replicas of Artomonov's bicycle and Dreys' bicycle are now exhibited side by side in Moscow's Polytechnical Museum.

Artomonov's is far superior in appearance—a high-wheeler, all iron in construction save for the wooden seat, and quite similar in appearance to high-wheels popular at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the latter also is on exhibit.

Artomonov's original now is on display at the local museum in Nizhni Tagil.

World priority in discovery of the principles of radar is being claimed for the Russian natural scientist, Alexander Popov, whom Soviet propagandists picture as the inventor of radio.

Mr. Popov, it is declared, first noted how electromagnetic waves bounced off metal parts of ships during experiments conducted with the Baltic fleet in the summer of 1897. In quoted summaries of his observations, Mr. Popov foresaw their practical possibilities for navigation.

Mr. Golovin, Director of the Popov Central Museum of Communication, publishes this material in *Red Fleet*: "It

was through practical utilization of this phenomenon discovered by Popov that radio-location technique originated and has developed."

Mr. Golovin asserts that it was not until twenty-five years later, in 1922, that American researchers came across this same phenomenon, which it is said British engineers rediscovered independently in 1930.

Other writers present material to document the claims of Mr. Popov's priority over Marconi, who is accused by Soviet press and radio of pirating Mr. Popov's ideas.

It would be wrong to discount all these claims entirely as idle boasting. In many countries there are and have been people working parallel on the same technical and research problems. More than once the same invention or discovery has been made by different people independently.

There was, in the past, a definite tendency in the West to look down upon Russian technical and scientific capacities and ignore or discount Russian achievements. To this the language barrier contributed, as did the attitude of an influential section of the old governing class which tried to ape the West in everything, even to the point of speaking Western languages in preference to their own.

By rescuing from oblivion little-known Russian inventors, the party woos Russian national pride. The move corresponds to a vital need of Russians to vindicate their self-respect and destroy the residue of an old sense of inferiority. It also increases the Russians' confidence in their capacity to catch up with and outstrip the rest of the world technically at the present time.

Having acknowledged success with the atom, the Soviets already are claiming to lead the world in the peacetime use of atomic energy. Before discounting this claim, it is well

to point out that the Soviet state, with its centralized and total control of all national resources, including brains and labor power, has important advantages in the atomic research race.

These considerations do not justify the absurdity of attempts to ascribe all notable human achievements to Russians and belittling the contributions of other nations. They merely place the current Soviet claims in their proper historic and psychological context. Moderation is seldom a Russian trait.

XVIII

PARTY ABOVE SCIENCE

THE NATURAL SCIENCES in the Soviet Union have been spliced to the Communist party line as tightly as the arts and literature.

Today, the biologist or physicist, like the writer or composer, is completely under the thumb of party ideology. The Communist Party Central Committee, not the laboratory, determines whether the findings of research are true or false. The laws of nature are established by party fiat.

Once a given theory or hypothesis in any field has official party backing, it no longer is open to question or criticism. Natural scientists who disagree are invited to jettison their doubts or else "get out of Soviet science." The vast majority conforms. Here, as in other spheres of Soviet life, the social and economic compulsions are overwhelming. This was strikingly shown by the recent Soviet "biological purge."

For more than fourteen years an agronomist named Trofim Denisovich Lysenko, who had some practical success in producing new varieties of drought- and frost-resisting wheat, but little natural scientific schooling, had been campaigning against the generally accepted views of heredity.

Lysenko, regarded as something of a quack by serious biologists, denounced the chromosome theory, rejected the findings of Mendel and Morgan, and proclaimed himself the follower of Ivan Michurin, a sort of home-grown Russian Burbank, who produced new varieties of apples and believed in the transmission of acquired characteristics.

Apart from his professional merits, during the purge of the 1930s, Lysenko won a formidable reputation as a man with strong Kremlin connections and dangerous to cross. He fared even better in the postwar period, when, in line with the general trend of repudiating foreign influences and exalting home-grown talent, his "Michurin biology" found increasing official favor.

By comparison, those biologists who still held with Mendel and Morgan were sitting targets for the now fashionable accusation of "groveling to the bourgeois West."

Lysenko was named president of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences. His moment of supreme triumph came on August 8, 1948, when he announced at a special session of the academy that his views had been officially approved by the Communist Party Central Committee.

Thereupon Lysenko's humbled opponents came trooping to the podium with declarations of recantation.

Heading the procession of penitents was Academician Pyotr Mikhailovich Zhukovsky, who only two days previously, while the session was still "debating," had strongly attacked Lysenko's views and defended the chromosome. Now Zhukovsky quavered: "My speech of two days ago before the central committee was a watershed dividing the two currents in biology, and was unworthy of a member of the Communist party and a Soviet scientist. I admit I held a false position."

Hinting indirectly at the motives that prompted his recantation, the graybeard pleaded: "I am a responsible person, for I work in the Committee for Awarding Stalin Prizes and in the Commission of Experts for the Conferment of Scholarly Degrees. I therefore consider it my moral duty to

become an honest Michurinite, an honest Soviet biologist. Comrade Michurinites! If I declare that I cross over to the ranks of the Michurinites and shall defend them, I do so honestly . . . Let the past that divided me from Trofim Denisovich Lysenko be forgotten. Believe me that today I act and speak as a true party member—that is, honestly (applause)."

The above is quoted from the published stenogram of the session. Others followed in Zhukovsky's train with almost identical recantations. The stenogram does not record if any of them emulated the famous example attributed to the great Italian astronomer, Galileo Galilei, who, forced to disavow his assertion that the earth revolves around the sun, is nevertheless said to have muttered under his breath, "Yet it does indeed move."

The session then moved on to the next order of business, the adoption of a resolution that said in part: "The Michurinite trend, headed by Academician Lysenko, has performed important and fruitful work in unmasking and smashing the theoretical positions of Morganism-Mendelism."

Then, before closing, the session unanimously approved a letter of greeting to Stalin, concluding with the words: "Long live foremost biological Michurinite science! Glory to great Stalin, leader of the people and guiding star of foremost science!" This, the stenogram records, was followed by "stormy, long-sustained applause, developing into ovation."

Only a few diehards refused to recant, and were dealt with accordingly.

Academician Nemchinov, director of the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy, was loudly heckled when he asserted: "The chromosome theory of heredity belongs to the golden fund of human knowledge." When he added that

as long as he headed the academy this theory "would not be concealed from the students," the claque stamped and shouted: "You should resign."

The noise and interruptions grew even louder when Nemchinov ventured to defend one of his faculty members, Professor Zhebrak, who had committed the cardinal sin of publishing an article in an American periodical, *Science*. While deploring this "unpatriotic action," Nemchinov insisted Zhebrak was still a distinguished natural scientist, and refused to discharge him.

Soon after the session, Nemchinov was removed as director and Zhebrak's project was liquidated.

Even before the session got under way, the press warm-up had indicated that Lysenko's critics would be thrown to the party wolves. Describing the atmosphere, Academician Boris Zavodovsky, a distinguished senior biologist, forced to interrupt his vacation in the Caucasus and hurry to Moscow to defend his views, complained: "The conditions under which this session was called were not quite normal. Insufficient opportunity was given to those who, either justly or unjustly, are listed among the Weissman-Morganists to prepare themselves and to enable them to speak out frankly.

"I see a profound contradiction between the line our party follows in favor of raising the authority of our Soviet science and the manner in which, in the *Literary Gazette* and elsewhere, all Soviet scientists who do not join in the chorus are condemned wholesale." He added: "There are other methods and approaches which must not be sacrificed and denied in science and in practice merely because they are not included in Lysenko's field of vision."

This warning went unheeded.

XIX

THE AGITATOR'S HANDBOOK

A HANDY and compact little reference book of facts and opinions about the Soviet Union and other countries recently came off the presses.

As its name implies, the *Agitator's Handbook* is distinguished from such Western capitalist publications as the *World Almanac* or the *Statesman's Yearbook* by the special need it is designed to fill.

It is designed to help the vast army of Communist agitators and propagandists in their task of constantly explaining and interpreting developments at home and abroad to the people at large in clear Marxist terms.

Not so voluminous as prolix capitalist handbooks, the *Agitator's Handbook* at the same time gives many items that are not to be found in any Western reference book, including the membership figures for Communist parties in many countries and the bracketed annotation "Under United States control" after the names of the Central American and Caribbean republics in the area and population tables.

Out of a total of 323 pages, the *Agitator's Handbook* devotes 241 pages to information about the Soviet Union, including information on population, economy, political structure, living conditions, armed forces.

Also included is the law on the protection of state secrets.

For the agitator seeking guidance through the complexities of world events that he may in turn explain these

simply and clearly to his listeners, perhaps the most useful section of the handbook is the concise dictionary at the back where current political terms and phrases are supplied with Marxist definitions.

The agitator looking for a definition of the oft-encountered word "aggression" will look it up and read:

"Aggression—attack, offensive for the purpose of seizure. *Aggressive policy*—policy of seizure. *Aggressive state*—a state that incites war. Such states in the period of the Second World War were Hitlerite Germany, imperialist Japan and their accomplices. At the present time the imperialists of the United States, Britain, and other capitalist countries pursue an aggressive policy, kindling a new world war."

Under the heading "Anarchy of Production" he will find: "planlessness in social production. Anarchy of production is inevitable under capitalism . . ."

As an illustration of "Antagonism, the dictionary cites: "Antagonism exists between the working class and the bourgeoisie: an irreconcilable contradiction, which as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin scientifically demonstrated, leads to the proletarian revolution, to the victory of the working class, the replacement of the capitalist system by socialism."

Other definitions include:

"Apologist—of capitalism: bourgeois scientists, right wing socialists, trotskyites and other agents of the bourgeoisie.

"Apolitisism—indifference to political life. The bourgeoisie tries to imbue the workers with apolitisism so as to distract them from the struggle against the capitalist order.

"Boom—noise, sensation. Stock exchange boom: artificial short-term rise in commodity prices and security quotations.

"Coalition—union. Coalition of powers: union, alliance of states against one or several states. There are progressive

coalitions, as when several states combine for struggle with aggression; there are reactionary coalitions as when several states combine for the imperialist aims of imposing their domination, suppressing liberty and waging predatory wars.

"Corruption—bribery, venality of political and public figures of bourgeois states: ministers, members of parliament, officials, journalists. Corruption is widely developed feature of capitalist countries, where the bourgeoisie bribes officials of the state apparatus, using them for carrying out measures and policy advantageous to this or that capitalistic monopoly.

"Degradation—decadence, consistent, constant movement downward. To degrade—deteriorate, to become decadent. Example: bourgeois culture continually degrades.

"Democracy—people's power, political structure under which power belongs to the people. Soviet, socialist democracy is genuine people's power. All state power in the U.S.S.R. belongs to the workers of town and country. Through the Soviets of workers' deputies the Stalin Constitution guarantees the development of Soviet democracy, the most consistent democracy in the world. In the U.S.S.R. the equality of all workers has been achieved regardless of sex, nationality and race.

"In Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland, Roumania, Hungary, and certain other countries measures have also been carried out that guarantee the development of people's democracy, which is essentially close to Soviet democracy.

"Bourgeois democracy is another matter. Bourgeois democracy is one of the forms of bourgeois dictatorship, camouflaged by so-called representative organs—parliament, municipal and rural self-governments. Bourgeois democracy,

which conceals the dictatorship of capitalist monopolies, exists in the United States, Britain, and other countries.

"Demilitarization—complete or partial destruction of military fortifications and installations, liquidation or reduction to minimum of armed forces, destruction of arms, war industry, and war potentials.

"To demilitarize a country means to carry out such measures as will prevent that country from being a military threat to other countries. According to the decisions of the Yalta and Berlin Conferences, complete demilitarization was to be carried out in Germany.

"However, the governments of Britain and the United States do not carry out their obligations . . . and pursue a policy of retaining and restoring German war industry and military formations for use in the struggle against the Soviet Union, the countries of people's democracy, and the democratic movement throughout the world.

"Discrimination—suppressing the rights of any state or its citizens as compared with the rights which other states or their citizens enjoy. Example: in the United States discrimination is practiced against the Negroes.

"Doctrine—a political, philosophic, or other teaching. Example: 'The Truman Doctrine'—a reactionary theory preaching the establishment of United States domination.

"Expansion—military expansion: occupation by troops of the territory of other countries or further enlargement of areas already seized. Political expansion: subordination of other countries to one's influence. Economic expansion: seizure of markets in other countries. The United States pursues an imperialist policy of expansion, seeking to establish world rule.

"Gangster—bandit member of a robber band. Gangsterism is widespread in the United States.

"Intervention—armed invasion, armed interference of one or several states in the internal affairs of another state. Example: in 1917-20, the foreign states United States, Britain, France, Japan, Germany organized intervention in Soviet Russia for the purpose of destroying the Soviet system, restoring capitalism, dismembering our country.

"Lynching—lynch law in the United States, brutal reprisals against Negroes and revolutionary workers . . . Lynching is a feature of American reality, an indication of the savage morals encouraged by the American bourgeoisie for the purpose of strengthening its class rule.

"Marshall Plan—declaration by United States foreign affairs minister General Marshall on June 5, 1947, with reference to so-called dollar 'aid' by the United States to European countries that had suffered from Hitlerite occupation. The 'Marshall Plan' is a plan for the economic and political enslavement of Europe by United States imperialists.

"The 'Marshall Plan' is calculated to subordinate the economy of Western Europe to the interests of American industrial magnates. It actually results in transferring to American monopolists control over industry, foreign trade, finance, and currency in Western European countries.

"The 'Marshall Plan' actually leads to liquidation of the national sovereignty of those countries.

"The 'Marshall Plan' is the foundation of the military-political bloc of the Western states directed against the U.S.S.R. and countries of people's democracy, against the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

"The United States uses Western Germany as the main base for carrying out its policy within this bloc. With the

help of the 'Marshall Plan' the United States monopolists seek to delay the economic crisis, market accumulated goods, get more profits, and dictate their will to the people of Europe.

"Political Reaction—resistance of moribund classes to social progress. Everything that supports the outmoded capitalist system, the rule of the bourgeoisie, belongs to reaction, to the reactionary camp. The main support and leading force of world reaction since the Second World War are the United States, American imperialism.

"Restoration—reestablishment of the old order, overthrown by revolution. Example: the imperialists of the United States and Britain want to restore the capitalist structure existing prior to 1945.

"State Sovereignty—political independence of a state. A state is called sovereign which is not subordinate in its foreign and internal policy to another state. The policy pursued by the United States toward European countries (Marshall Plan) leads to the violation of the sovereignty of those countries.

"Vassal—in the broad sense of the word 'vassal' means 'dependent.' Thus, during the Second World War, Hungary, Roumania, Finland were vassals of Hitlerite Germany. Example: the Benelux countries—Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg—are economic and political vassals of the United States.

"Veto—Latin word meaning 'I forbid.' The veto has a tremendous meaning in the work of the Security Council of the United Nations, where the principal decisions are considered adopted only when no one of the permanent Council members votes against them. The requirement of unanimity of the great powers in deciding basic questions is a most

important guarantee of the success of the struggle for peace and security.

"That is why the Anglo-American imperialists violently attack the voting method set up by the Charter for the Security Council."

XX

THE TRUTH ABOUT JEWS IN RUSSIA

1

"COULD you use a good secretary?" an old Jewish friend asked. "How about taking on my son?"

I was rather surprised at the suggestion. My friend knew as well as I that it was hardly discreet for a Soviet citizen to work for a foreign correspondent unless "assigned" to the job. Moreover, his son recently had qualified for his master's degree in history with high honors, which should have guaranteed him a teaching post in almost any institution of higher learning. I said as much.

"That's what he thought," my friend answered grimly, "until he started making the rounds."

It turned out that wherever his son, who looked Russian, applied for a job, he was well received and told to fill out the application blank. But the moment his interviewer saw the word "Jewish" he was politely told there were no vacancies—sorry. After months of this, the son was desperate for work.

When our conversation took place, at first I discounted my friend's story, but soon I found corroboration from another source. The head of a department in a large educa-

tional institution told me he had received a directive to hire no more Jewish teachers and to dismiss those already on his staff whenever a convenient pretext presented itself.

Under new Communist party instructions, the Jews even then were being eliminated from any leading part in Soviet intellectual and political life. This was not a mere reversion to the old-time anti-Semitism, of which a strong residue remained. Though anti-Semitism lent itself to the new policy, the party's aims were not to be confused with the pre-revolutionary pogroms or with the Nazi genocide. The present campaign was not directed against the Jews as a race. Instead, the Communists attacked them as a cultural group whose conduct was branded unreliable—and consequently subject to blacklisting.

Before the war there was little or no "Jewish problem" in the Soviet Union. The Communist party actively combated anti-Semitism and admitted Jews to positions of trust and authority. Although Trotsky and his principal followers were Jews, the issue of anti-Semitism never cropped up during the famous treason trials and the attendant purge.

The Jews as a group were grateful for the equality accorded them, and were among the staunchest supporters of the Soviet regime. The mass of Jews was fully integrated into Soviet society and was gradually being absorbed. Many had discarded their Jewish identity and taken Russian names.

The war and its aftermath wrought profound changes in the status and outlook of the Jews. Nazi persecution re-kindled Jewish consciousness and Jewish solidarity.

At the same time, Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda not only sank roots in the invaded Ukraine and Byelorussia, which had the largest pre-war Jewish population, but also found response behind the Soviet lines. During the hasty evacua-

tion of Moscow in October, 1941, when the Germans were almost at the gates, rumors spread that the Jews had grabbed all the vehicles and made off with vast treasure, leaving the rest of the population in the lurch.

Like many slanders, this had a grain of truth, for the Jews, knowing full well what lay in store for them if they fell into Nazi hands, fled the city en masse.

Stories, many doubtless planted by the Nazis, were circulated among the Soviet troops to the effect that the Jews were living in luxury and ease far to the rear, while Russians perished at the front for their sake. The fact that large numbers of Jews were cited for gallantry did not fully spike these rumors, which fed on latent anti-Semitism.

After the war, Jews who came back from evacuation sometimes found that in their absence their houses had been taken over by Gentiles, together with their belongings. Nor were the usurpers always gracious about making restitution. Moreover, in the invaded areas returned Jews were often as strangers in their own land. They came home to find their relatives and friends wiped out, the roots of their existence gone.

The cumulative impact of these experiences transformed the Soviet citizen of Jewish origin into a Jew of Soviet citizenship—a Jew first and foremost, in his own eyes and those of his neighbors, with a background and ties that marked him apart. Hence, the tremendous and unexpected enthusiasm of Soviet Jewry for the state of Israel. But even before that event, the changed Jewish outlook was expressed in an increasingly detached attitude toward the Soviet surroundings and, above all, in an urge for closer contact and understanding with the West.

In the summer of 1946, an American rabbi, member of a

group of United States clergymen which had collected funds for Russian war relief, visited the Moscow synagogue. The local Jews gave him an enthusiastic and highly emotional welcome, voicing their affection and admiration for America and gratitude for American aid, which still was fresh in everyone's memory. Thereafter, the party signaled its first stern warnings against the Jewish tendency to "grovel to the West"—in strict confidence.

With the advent of Israel, Soviet Jews saw, or thought they saw, the promise of a new and better life. This expectation was strengthened when the Soviet government promptly recognized the new state, even though Communist policy had always vigorously opposed Zionism and had ruthlessly suppressed all Zionist organizations.

With the state of Israel an accomplished fact, however, Soviet policy makers saw the chance to gain a foothold in the Middle East. Accordingly, Israel received a favorable press, and party lectures were organized on the subject.

After one such lecture in Moscow, a man in the audience got up and asked the speaker how Jews wishing to emigrate to Israel should make their applications. Instead of answering, the speaker launched a violent tirade, saying that such a question was unworthy of a loyal Soviet citizen, who should prize his birthright too much even to think of wanting to emigrate, and that the very idea was treasonable. Others in the audience rallied to the questioner's support: Had not Soviet citizens of Polish and Czech extraction been allowed to leave under repatriation agreements with the respective countries? Why not a similar agreement with Israel?

When members of the Israeli Legation, headed by Mrs. Golda Meyerson, reached Moscow, they received a tremen-

dous spontaneous ovation from the local Jews, first at the synagogue, then under the windows of their Metropol Hotel rooms—something without precedent in Soviet history. Immediately the legation was flooded with inquiries about how to get to Israel. Somehow, the rumor got started that arrangements were under way for a wholesale population transfer of Soviet Jews to Israel. Jews by the thousands began liquidating their affairs and packing their bags for the impending exodus. But no new Moses appeared to lead them. Unlike the Red Sea, the red curtain did not part to let them pass.

2

THOROUGHLY alarmed by the flood of Jewish enthusiasm for Israel which sprang up in the winter of 1948-49, the Kremlin reacted sharply.

Almost overnight, the Israeli Legation was effectively isolated from further contact with the Jewish population. Police agents turned away Soviet visitors. A few judicious arrests curbed further demonstrations. The press changed its tone toward Israel, and began to stress the allegedly "bourgeois nationalist" character of the Tel Aviv government and to hint that Prime Minister David Ben Gurion was a Wall Street stooge.

The MVD proceeded to the swift liquidation of Jewish social and cultural organizations. In Moscow, the premises of the Yiddish-language newspaper *Einheit* and the publish-

ing house Emess were sealed up one week end without previous warning to the employees or subsequent explanation. A like fate overtook the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. Presumably, under the new directive, all such organizations were looked upon as potential centers of "Jewish nationalism" (Zionism), and therefore suspect.

Even more drastic was the systematic campaign to eliminate Jews from posts of responsibility and especially from positions involving contact with the outside world. In a matter of weeks, all Jews serving with the Soviet occupation administrations in Germany and Austria were recalled. No more Jews were included on foreign missions and delegations.

Little more than a decade ago a Jew, Maxim Litvinov, headed the Soviet Foreign Office. Several top Soviet envoys were Jewish—including Konstantin Umansky in Washington, Ivan Maisky in London. Today Jews are not even admitted to the special school that trains personnel for Soviet foreign service. The same restrictions apply to the Ministry of Foreign Trade.

Elsewhere in the government and party apparatus a similar process of elimination has occurred. One will search in vain, for example, for recent Jewish recruits to the central party echelons. The one Jew on the Politburo is Lazar Kaganovich, a long-standing member with strong personal connections whose loyalty is above suspicion.

The campaign against the Jews entered its most blatant phase in January, 1949, with the onslaught against the so-called "homeless" or "mongrel cosmopolites." While the object was to eliminate all writers, critics, and natural scientists who showed the least sympathy for the West and

strayed the least bit from the party line, a large portion of the victims was Jewish.

It began in a fairly decorous and "comradely" fashion. But soon the entire arsenal of Soviet invective was brought into play. The offenders were tossed out of the party and the Writers' Union, thereby ending their literary careers.

The "cosmopolites" were accused of deliberately slandering and belittling Soviet achievements in literature, art, or natural science while "fawning" upon the "decadent" culture of the West. The carping of the "cosmopolite" drama critics, it appeared, was responsible for the poverty of the current stage repertory.

According to Petrus Brovka, head of the Byelorussian Writers' Union, the "cosmopolites . . . tried to knife the best Soviet patriotic plays, hindered their production in the theaters . . . Homeless cosmopolitanism, fawning on things foreign, found direct expression in the productions of the Jewish Theater. On the stage of that theater bourgeois America was lauded as the promised land."

The gifted Ukrainian Jewish poet Leonid Pyervomaisky was attacked because a visit to the Roumanian city of Sinaia had moved him to "a pathological association with the Biblical Sinai, whence, according to Biblical legend, Moses proclaimed his laws three thousand years ago." All this led party critics to suspect Pyervomaisky had not abandoned the Zionism he openly professed back in 1928.

Typical of the fate of Jewish scholars under the new line was the attack on Professor Eichenbaum of the Leningrad University faculty of literature.

Professor Eichenbaum was branded a cosmopolite who vilified and belittled Russian culture. This attack was based

on the fact that back in 1929 he had ventured to acknowledge a preference for Western European, as opposed to Slavic, literature. Moreover, he had spoken highly in print of his own father as "a most gifted man who studied the Bible and the Talmud" and who was "a light to Israel." He had further recalled that another of his forebears wrote Hebrew poetry.

Sneered *Zvezda*: "He was trying to set up a special, glaringly Morganite (as opposed to Michurinite) theory of heredity."

Among the Jewish intellectuals under fire were many who had taken Russian names. Their attackers began by inserting their old Jewish names in brackets and ended by using the Jewish names exclusively.

By this process Kholodov became Meyerovich, Yasny became Finkelstein, Zhdanov became Lifshitz, Sanov became Smulson, and Gan became Kagan. Never were the "homeless cosmopolites" openly identified as Jews, but cartoonists depicted them with Faginlike profiles, and the public got the point.

The campaign against the "cosmopolites" roused such unfavorable repercussion abroad, especially in countries where Communists enjoyed Jewish support, that the party blew the whistle on its more vulgar and flamboyant aspects. The virulent name-calling ceased, along with the cartoons, but this in no way affected basic policy.

The only important Jewish writers to survive the literary purge were Ilya Ehrenburg and proverbial hatchetman David Zaslavsky. But even they went into temporary eclipse at the height of the campaign.

Ehrenburg, whose Western European associations made a

likely target for charges of "cosmopolitanism," forestalled attack by penning virulent attacks on Zionism and by publicly insulting Mrs. Meyerson, the Israeli minister.

On being introduced to him at a diplomatic reception, Mrs. Meyerson addressed Ehrenburg in English, a language he affects not to know. He cut her short by remarking that nothing disgusted him more than to hear a Russian-born Jewess speaking English.

Some weeks later, when I asked Mrs. Meyerson whether her legation was still hoping to arrange for Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel, she smiled and said: "After all, we are realists."

XXI

THE BALTIC PROVINCES —END OF A BRANCH LINE

I

THE MVD colonel opposite pulled back the car window curtain and stared pensively at the faint, lonely lights floating in inky blackness.

"A morose, difficult people, these Letts," he mused. "They don't like us Russians, they don't take easily to our kind of social order. Their dispositions are just too difficult and selfish. If I had my way, we would simply ship the whole lot off to some safe spot behind the Urals—plenty of room for them there—where they could make trouble. Then we would resettle the place with our own people."

I objected that this might prove a rather difficult undertaking.

"If we could do it with the Volga Germans, the Crimean Tatars, the Chechans, the East Prussians, we could do it here," the colonel countered. "We must have a safe lock on our western approaches. Why, at the first opportunity these people would knife us in the back the way they did in 1941. Only a month ago, a train was held up on this very run. Robbed all the Russian passengers, didn't touch the others.

Kidnapped two party functionaries who haven't been heard from since.

"And it's hopeless to track down the offenders. The whole countryside is in league with them. In the daytime they just melt into the surrounding population. If you arrest one, you might as well arrest them all."

We gained this bit of insight into Soviet psychology en route by train to Riga, Latvia, from Libau—also in Latvia—where our boat from Stockholm had docked because ice blocked the way to Leningrad.

There is something about Russian trains conducive to conversation. The sense of temporary detachment from the world, the anonymity of the passengers, who tactfully refrain from exchanging names, and above all, the assurance that on arrival each will go about his separate business, with little likelihood of paths recrossing—these factors combine to break down reserve and give the natural Russian talkativeness a chance to assert itself around the steaming samovar. Moreover, we were far off the beaten path where a Russian might expect to encounter foreigners.

I remarked to the MVD colonel that seldom had I seen such a variety and abundance of meat as in the Libau market, and at a fraction of Moscow prices. That, he explained, was merely because the peasants sensed the approach of collectivization. So far, only about one-tenth of the Latvian peasantry had been collectivized—this was December, 1948—but the mass drive was about to begin in earnest, so the peasants were slaughtering their animals to forestall having to turn them into the collectives. That, said the colonel, showed how difficult they were to handle.

"This time next year," he added brightly, "you'll have

trouble finding spare ribs. By then, we shall have achieved one hundred per cent collectivization." (Actually, the colonel's prediction was overfulfilled ahead of time. Russian friends who went to the Latvian seaside last summer for their vacation returned complaining of the food situation and the high prices in the market.)

In Riga we found meat even more plentiful than in Libau. We bought a huge Christmas turkey, several chickens, and enough cuts of steak and lamb to last us in Moscow for the next two months. Most of the booths in Riga's huge covered market halls were occupied by individual peasants. Most of them spoke little or no Russian, and when addressed in that language their faces went stony, with cold hatred staring from their eyes.

I tried in vain, during our three-day stay in Riga, to recapture some faint echo of the city I had known well a decade earlier. It was like walking into the house of friends where everything was once familiar and finding the friends gone, with no forwarding address, while total strangers lived, or rather bivouacked, in rooms stripped of their familiar and pleasant furnishings, now dank and neglected.

I have seen many wasted cities in the wake of war—Kharkov, Kiev, Smolensk, Hamburg, Berlin, Warsaw. But none, even those razed to the ground, produced such a feeling of final and irrevocable ruin as Riga, where actual physical damage, save in the old town near the water front, was small. What had been destroyed in Riga was not the buildings, which are replaceable, but the soul of the city, its character, atmosphere, and personality. Gone without trace were the pleasant, well-dressed crowds, the attractive restaurants, cafes, and bright little shops—prewar Riga had a florist to every block.

Gone was everything that had made Riga the Baltic metropolis, the Paris of the North, as its inhabitants were fond of claiming.

When my wife went outside, everyone would stop in their tracks and gape at clothes which would have passed unnoticed in Moscow, where Western fashions penetrate. During our three days, we saw not one well-dressed woman or man. After a few attempts to find a restaurant with edible food, we gave up and stuck to the Intourist Hotel dining room.

Before the war, Riga was only fifty minutes by plane from Stockholm. Today, there are no planes. Stockholm, as far as Rigans are concerned, might as well be on another planet. From an international crossroads, the city has become the end of a branch line from Moscow—thirty hours away by train.

From local inhabitants, I pieced together parts of the story. When the Soviets took over in 1940, the Baltic States had remained a sort of semi-capitalist oasis within the Soviet borders, little attempt being made at sovietization beyond nationalizing the factories. Private shops and small peasant proprietors were untouched.

Nor were the Soviets in any immediate hurry about changing the local economy when they returned in 1944. As late as 1946, private trade still flourished in Riga. At the end of that year, the tax on private shops was quadrupled—from two thousand to eight thousand rubles. Most of the shopkeepers grumbled but managed to meet it. Then, at the end of 1947, the rate was quadrupled again. This also coincided with the currency reform, when the old currency was called in at the rate of ten to one. The tax was payable in the new

currency. This effectively wiped out Riga's private trade at a single blow.

The government also began clamping down politically.

A new wave of arrests and deportations under the heading of "struggle with speculators" further thinned the native Rigan population to a point not far from the policy of total population transfer advocated by our fellow passenger, the MVD colonel. Most estimates we heard agreed that Riga's total population figure was now back at the four hundred thousand mark, where it had stood before the war.

But four-fifths of the inhabitants had moved in from war-devastated, nearby areas of western Russia and Byelorussia, attracted by Riga's available housing space. These newcomers gave the city its new tone and accent.

2

IN RIGA'S CENTER still stands the graceful, slender monument to Latvian independence. "To the memory of our independence," wryly remark the citizens, hundreds of whom leave offerings of flowers around the base, which bears the inscription: FOR LAND AND FREEDOM.

Having lost their freedom, thousands of Latvia's farmer proprietors now are losing their land. Throughout the Baltic area collectivization of agriculture is nearing the hundred per cent mark. Communist party propagandists stress that the process is strictly voluntary. In practice, the peasant or farmer is free either to sign up with the collective or else go

down in the books as a "kulak"—a farmer owning more than twenty-five acres of land and consequently well-to-do.

The implications of this were outlined by Party Secretary Karotamma, addressing the Estonian Communist Party Congress on the eve of the collectivization drive, which was launched simultaneously in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Mr. Karotamma declared:

"One of the prime requisites for the establishment of collective farms is merciless struggle against the kulaks, struggle for their decisive limitation and elimination. The more determined and ruthless our attack on the counter-revolutionary kulak nationalist elements, the more successful will be our work in building collective farms."

Inasmuch as practically all of the Estonian and Latvian peasantry would, if judged by Russian standards, qualify as kulaks, this is quite a forceful argument in favor of joining the collectives.

Elimination of the kulaks is effected mainly by means of taxation, a weapon the Soviets used so skilfully in liquidating private trade—since the power to tax is the power to destroy.

Highly revealing in this connection is the rural income tax law adopted for Estonia a year and a half ago. Similar laws exist in the other Baltic countries. The law begins by according a fifty percent income tax discount to all collective farm members. The kulaks, by contrast, are subject to full payment.

It is provided that in every individual instance the income on which tax is to be assessed shall be computed on the basis of holdings in land and livestock, special allowances being made for differences in the fertility of the soil. Income from livestock is calculated at so much per head,

the amount ranging from thirteen hundred rubles for the best breeds of cow to a hundred rubles per head of goats or sheep and twenty rubles per beehive.

Here again collective farm members enjoy an advantage in the form of tax exemption on their income from sheep, goats or pigs. The law further exempts from taxation the income from newly cleared virgin soil for two years and from land that required extensive improvement, such as stump removing and terracing, for three years.

No income tax is levied on incomes below twenty-five hundred rubles. The graduated tax rate extends from one per cent on incomes up to four thousand rubles to fourteen per cent on incomes between twenty thousand and twenty-two thousand rubles. Above the maximum, the government claims fifty kopecks out of every ruble.

Persons designated as kulaks not only are excluded from the various exemptions, but in addition to the regular tax rate are subject to a special surtax of twenty per cent on incomes under fifteen thousand rubles and thirty per cent on incomes between fifteen thousand and twenty thousand rubles.

The law classifies as kulaks those farmers who, during the German occupation or since then, employed permanent hired help (an exception is made for the employment of one hired hand by the day during harvest season in cases where the farmer's own family is shorthanded); those who derived regular income from renting farm machinery, either in money or in kind; those who "exploited" the labor of other peasants as payment for the loan of draft animals, seed, food, or farm machinery; those who derived regular income from the operation of flour mills, sawmills, wool carding machines, or from the leasing of such enterprises

or of land, and those who purchased goods or commodities for resale at a profit.

This list is sufficiently comprehensive to provide pretext for fitting any farmer into the kulak category. The actual lists of kulaks are compiled by the local rural Soviet council, with bills of particulars appended.

These initial lists are next submitted to the district Soviet for approval, after which this body issues instructions to the financial authorities to levy the tax, plus surtax, as provided in the law. Upon receiving their tax bills, those listed as kulaks may appeal against this classification to the district Soviet, which is instructed to review their decision within a two-week period.

Unfavorable reviews by the district Soviet may be appealed to the Council of Ministers (cabinet) of the Estonian Soviet Republic, whose decision is final and irrevocable. Finally, the law provides that in forcible collection of tax arrears from kulaks—under the special confiscatory rates—the rules barring seizure and confiscation of certain kinds of personal property do not apply. There are no limits to the kulak's liability.

This tax law helps to explain why the collectivization drive, started so recently in this traditional area of small, independent peasant proprietors, has achieved such spectacular results ahead of schedule. To complete the picture, it should be pointed out that the above tax concerns the peasant's cash obligations to the state, quite apart from his schedule of deliveries in kind. High, discriminatory quotas are set for kulaks here, too.

The high-pressure collectivization of the Baltic States fits into the general pattern of the Soviet's policy of consolidating its position in recently acquired peripheral areas. It also

provides a useful proving ground for the far vaster impending task of collectivizing the peasantry in the Russian satellite states.

3

THE BALTIC STATES have served as a proving ground not only for the current collectivization drive in eastern Europe but also for Communist policy toward religion in the satellites—and notably in those countries with a large Roman Catholic population.

The Orthodox Church, as the official religion of the Russian emperors, long had rendered mainly unto Caesar, and, after the Russian Revolution, never disputed the ultimate authority of the new state. Since the war, in return for a few sops, it readily and abjectly has consented to serve as an arm of Soviet policy.

Roman Catholicism, with its highly disciplined hierarchy, its dominant hold on the lives and loyalties of its communicants, and above all, its allegiance to the Vatican, presented a more serious challenge to the Soviets.

The first almost solidly Roman Catholic country to fall under Soviet sway was Lithuania, and a sizable Roman Catholic minority also existed in Latvia. Here the laboratory conditions for devising and testing techniques to deal with the problem were, from the Soviet standpoint, ideal. For, as integral parts of Soviet territory, the Baltic countries could be hermetically sealed off from the outside world to an ex-

tent not possible, at least in the beginning, in Hungary, Czechoslovakia or Poland.

The Soviets thus were able effectively to exclude all foreign observers and ban all travel from the area except by authorized persons. Consequently, the Kremlin could conduct its experiments and control laboratory conditions as it pleased, without fear of embarrassing publicity.

The initial step, taken as soon as the Soviet troops moved in, was to cut all contact between the Roman Catholic clergy in the Baltic area and the Papal See. This was simple, thanks to the strict control over the issuance—or rather, non-issuance—of exit and entrance visas.

Next, a vigorous and systematic drive was launched against the upper clergy, charged with all manner of treasonous crimes against the state, culminating in the trial and conviction of a number of prelates for anti-Soviet activities.

A report published in Vilna, the Lithuanian capital, back in 1947—long before the arrest of Josef Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary—accused members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Lithuania of complicity with “the counter-revolutionary underground” and described these alleged activities as “one of the most shameful pages in the history of Lithuanian Catholic reaction.”

Getting down to cases, the report states that Bishop Boriavicius of Tersiai was sentenced by the courts as “an enemy of the people” for aiding what the Russian Communists label “terrorists,” a term they use for anyone who opposes their regime. He was convicted of sheltering the leader of a terrorist group by registering him as a church employee. Other culprits listed include two father superiors of a Franciscan monastery at Kretinga, near Memel, said to have belonged to a terrorist group and to have supplied the ter-

rorists with the sum of two hundred thousand rubles for the purchase of arms.

The report claims that terrorist headquarters were located within the monastery walls and that the monks printed anti-Soviet leaflets within the monastery chapel.

The Bishop of Kaisedorys also was convicted of active membership in a terrorist group, of distributing anti-Soviet literature, preaching anti-Soviet sermons from the pulpit, sheltering terrorists in his house, and administering the oath of allegiance to terrorist recruits. The report further asserts that clerical terrorists were responsible for "personally murdering many honest toilers—poor peasants, new settlers, Soviet intellectuals, often with their entire families."

Irrespective of the charges against the clergy, the report provides important confirmation of the extent of underground activity in Lithuania, a subject seldom mentioned in the Soviet press.

Aside from terrorism, the report accuses "clerical reactionaries" of seeking to indoctrinate the population, especially the youth. Church choirs, it alleges, were set up as fronts for revivals of Roman Catholic youth organizations. In the town of Ukmerge, it states, choir members distributed anti-Soviet leaflets and collected information on local Communist party functionaries for the use of terrorists. In Vilna, according to the report, some priests sought to discourage youths from joining the Komsomol, and went around calling on parents of Komsomol members, urging them to compel their children to resign from the organization.

"Moral responsibility" for all these anti-Soviet activities is imputed to the heads of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who, the report charges, failed to denounce such doings. From this, the report infers that "the heads of the Catholic

Church in Lithuania are in some degree in sympathy with these activities" and are "following in the footsteps of the Vatican, which in every way encourages the Fascist underground."

Even from such fragmentary information it is evident how the tactics currently used against the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, with Poland next in line, originally were employed in Lithuania. Then, too, the systematic effort to discredit and compromise the upper clergy in the eyes of the masses was coupled with an attempt to win over a portion of the lower clergy, whom the report absolves from enumerated crimes and describes as "profoundly shocked by the activities of the clerical reactionaries."

In Lithuania, too, the purpose of this maneuver was to encourage the formation of a breakaway, pro-Communist "national catholic" movement. For want of data, it is hard to say just how successful this policy has been. But, apparently, after the widespread arrests indicated in the report, a fair percentage of the priests still circulating were those who had agreed to co-operate with the Communist regime in some measure.

Sole functioning Roman Catholic church in Moscow is St. Louis des Francais—traditionally the church of the French community. Last summer, Father Thomas, the French priest, was requested to hand over his keys. Thereafter, he was permitted to say Mass there once a week for the diplomats, but no longer had free access to the church at other times.

The official explanation was that a group of Catholics, Soviet citizens, had petitioned for a place of worship, and the Soviet authorities, in conformity with the professed So-

viet policy of freedom of worship, had agreed to honor their claim. In due course, a priest arrived from Lithuania. He introduced himself as Father Adamovich. When Father Thomas asked to see his credentials from his bishop, Father Adamovich explained that he had presented them and turned them over to the Soviet Government Committee on Religious Affairs.

XXII

FOREIGN ENVOYS AND PRESS CORPS

1

THROUGHOUT their entire stay in Moscow, ambassadors were under the most vigilant observation. 'Watchmen' were stationed at the doors of the houses they occupied, special escorts accompanied the foreigners whenever they went out for any reason whatever . . . Nobody could even come to see the ambassador to discuss private matters with him without incurring dangerous suspicion."

The above passage from the writings of Klyuchevsky, great Russian nineteenth century historian, fits fully the present status of diplomats in Moscow.

Such excerpts sometimes are used to prove that suspicion of foreigners in Russia antedated the Soviet regime.

But Klyuchevsky was dealing not with the treatment accorded ambassadors in the period prior to the revolution, nor even the situation in the late nineteenth century, when he penned the above quotation. He was describing the barbarous (his own word) treatment of foreign envoys in the time of Ivan the Terrible.

A few paragraphs later he notes with satisfaction that by the middle of the seventeenth century things had improved greatly, that by then, "after the first audience, the ambas-

sador and his retinue might unimpeded leave their apartments and inspect the town, even without an escort."

Currently, it is impossible for the American ambassador in Moscow to so much as cross the street without being followed by his numerous MVD bodyguard.

Nor does he have Soviet callers on private business or any opportunity to meet or talk to any Soviet citizen outside his formal relations with the Foreign Ministry and his attendance at rare official functions.

Soviet ambassadors to the United States and visiting Soviet officials often have exercised the right of free speech accorded them on American soil to attack United States policy and praise Soviet policy before large audiences.

No American ambassador in Moscow has been given an opportunity to convey his country's viewpoint to the Soviet public through any channel whatever.

Embassy personnel below the rank of minister or counselor are not on the Protocol Division's invitation list to official functions, and their social contacts with Russians are therefore even more circumscribed.

They may go to the theater, ballet or to concerts; they may even travel to certain prescribed places. But, wherever they go, they are cut off from the people and life around them by an invisible but impenetrable wall.

The frustration caused by this social ostracism is compounded by the fact that normal diplomatic duties, as performed and understood in normal posts, are largely nonexistent in Moscow.

Typical is the case of the consul general of one of the larger South American republics, who was drawing a monthly salary of twenty-five hundred dollars, plus a large expense allowance. During a year's operations in Russia his

government's sole return on this financial outlay was the sum of ten dollars, collected for the issuance of one visa.

The more studious diplomats go in for intensive Russian lessons. But the only conversational practice they are likely to get is with their domestic help.

Both their Russian teacher and their servants are assigned to them by Burobin—a fabulous organization affiliated with the Foreign Ministry, which handles all the material and cultural wants of the diplomatic corps.

If a diplomat needs a cook, or opera tickets, or a leak in the roof repaired, or firewood, or a dance orchestra, or a seat on a plane to Stockholm, or wishes to rent a building, he sends in a written request to Burobin. (When the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch sent a representative to Moscow to establish permanent liaison with the Moscow Patriarch, Burobin even supplied him with a church.)

Time was, before relations with the West had far declined, when a special Burobin "artistic" section provided ballet dancers and other talent for select diplomatic circles.

Head of this section was a sort of male Elsa Maxwell named Alexandrov, who liked nice things and maintained a plushy apartment where he entertained diplomats lavishly. About two years ago the section was liquidated, as were Alexandrov, his wife, and several assistants, presumably because they enjoyed parties beyond the call of duty.

With Alexandrov gone, the diplomats have had no actual alternative to entertaining one another, which they do constantly at parties where the same persons see one another night after night. As a result, the Moscow diplomatic corps gets to know itself remarkably well.

The international situation is reproduced in microcosm within the Moscow foreign colony. With every new "treason

trial" the Czechs, Poles, Roumanians, Hungarians, and Bulgarians hold themselves increasingly aloof from the Westerners, who flock closer and closer together. The Finns and neutral Swedes do their best to be friends with both groups. The Yugoslavs, since the Cominform break, associate with almost no one.

Far more Russian guests put in an appearance at the national anniversary receptions of the satellite missions than come to the American Fourth of July party or the British king's birthday reception. Save for this, satellite diplomats in Moscow are treated scarcely better than their Western colleagues.

One satellite ambassador vainly asked Burobin for accommodations in a sanatorium at a Caucasian spa. The first secretary of another satellite mission complained bitterly to me that during his two years in Moscow he had never once set foot inside a Russian home. The charge d'affaires of yet another satellite expressed to me his envy that we lived in a private house and therefore could have Russian friends, whereas, he added, no Russian ever would brave the gantlet of scrutiny to go to his hotel room. Not only did this man, an important Communist party member, complain of constant surveillance, he added that his desk in the hotel room was carefully searched, regularly, twice a week.

I had made a similar discovery with regard to my own hotel room office desk, but had assumed American correspondents were objects of special attention from which the diplomats of "friendly" countries naturally would be exempt.

There is a measure of truth in the common Soviet grievance that Western diplomats often arrive in Moscow with

preconceived hostility, their minds made up beforehand to find fault with everything.

But the most embittered, disillusioned members of the Moscow diplomatic colony invariably are those who first came full of sympathy and admiration for the Soviet Union, full of friendly eagerness to get to know the country and its people.

For this, the Soviet government has only itself to thank. If it were the Soviets' calculated purpose to antagonize and alienate diplomats assigned to Moscow, they could do no better than pursue the present policy.

2

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN press corps in Moscow gradually has dwindled from a wartime two dozen or more to the present all-time low of five, all Americans. Reasons for the decline are (1) extreme difficulty in obtaining entry visas, (2) astronomical living and operating costs, and (3) growing suppressiveness of censorship.

The last regular British correspondent, the Reuters representative, recently was ordered home when, after devaluation, his agency decided to close its Moscow bureau because of rising expense and diminishing copy. Another former English newspaperman has stayed on in Moscow to become a Soviet propaganda agent.

Two of the American correspondents represent the Asso-

ciated Press, one the United Press, one the New York *Times*. The fifth works as a part-time correspondent for a British agency.

Of the five, four are held in Moscow by personal ties because of the Soviet policy of refusing exit visas to Soviet wives of foreigners and their children, and more recently by forbidding their citizens to marry foreigners. This also gives the Soviets a powerful lever, since the correspondents must renew their residence permits every few months and may be expelled from the country on the slightest pretext.

Until lately, resident correspondents wishing to go abroad might obtain re-entry permits valid for as much as two months. As of January, 1949, this practice was discontinued. Thereafter, correspondents were told that if they went out of the country they must apply for entry visas through a Soviet consulate. The first and only test case of how this new "system" operates was that of the New York *Herald-Tribune* correspondent, who left in June, planning to stay away a few weeks. After waiting four months for his re-entry visa, he abandoned hope of getting back.

His experience explains why none of the remaining correspondents has made shopping or vacation trips to Stockholm or elsewhere lately. It should be added that in practice even the limited permission to travel within the country accorded to diplomats is withheld from correspondents.

Working conditions of the foreign press in Moscow have been copiously described by others, especially the troubles with the censorship. I therefore shall limit myself to stating that we correspondents were denied all access to Soviet organizations, officials, or personalities, or to any other news source save the Soviet press and Moscow radio. Frequently, we could not even use material published in the newspaper

Pravda or broadcast by the Soviet radio. In the past year, stories gleaned from the provincial press were killed as a rule.

There was no appeal from the arbitrary censorship. In fact, on cable copy we did not even know what deletions had been made until after the story had been sent. Not only was there wholesale daily suppression of factual material, but often deliberate changes in meaning were made by the sly deletion or insertion of a negative. Sometimes, when a correspondent quoted a Soviet opinion, giving the source, the quotation marks were deleted, as well as the reference to the source, in such a way as to make the whole thing appear as the correspondent's own view.

- The status of newsmen in Moscow is rendered far more precarious than that of diplomats, through lack of the margin of security that diplomatic immunity gives. Under the vague and comprehensive Soviet State Secrets Law, any one of them might easily be charged with espionage and convicted.

With so few candidates available, the correspondents are sitting targets for any reprisals or frame-ups the Soviets may wish to organize. This was shown by the expulsion of Robert Magidoff in the spring of 1948 and of Anna Louise Strong last February.

The shabby treatment accorded Miss Strong after a lifetime of loyal service to the Communist cause doubtless has baffled many persons. Actually, there is a rational explanation. Miss Strong herself unwittingly supplied the clue when she wrote afterward that her MVD inquisitor during her brief incarceration apparently cared nothing for the "democratic" movement abroad and the repercussions her arrest might have among the supporters of Henry A. Wal-

lace. That was quite logical. The sentimental affection of fellow travelers for the Soviet Union is unrequited by the MVD, which divides mankind into two main categories—dupes and enemies.

The fact that Miss Strong had been a pro-Soviet wheel-horse for thirty years counted for naught once she grew restive in the traces. For almost a year, Miss Strong had gone around Moscow grumbling about the "bureaucrats" of the Press Department who prevented her from getting good stories and, in particular, blocked her cherished project of going to Communist China via the overland route to Manchuria.

Being an enterprising woman, she refused to be put off by the endless evasions which Russians prefer to point-blank refusal. When she got nowhere with the Russians, she sought out visiting Chinese Communist and North Korean officials and delegates in their hotel rooms. They, not knowing the situation and impressed by Miss Strong's reputation and purported friendship with Mao Tze-tung and the Kremlin higher-ups, would rashly promise to assist her. When the Soviet authorities learned of this, they were furious. Meanwhile, some of her less discreet remarks, including favorable references to Marshal Tito, doubtless had gotten back to them.

That settled it. The authorities decided that Miss Strong must not be permitted to reach Communist China under any conditions—by land, sea or air. For, they must have reasoned, with her reputation and connections, given her present mood, she might sow all kinds of heresy among the Chinese Communists. The one way to stop her, the Kremlin doubtless figured, was to blast her reputation by accus-

ing her of espionage and expelling her in disgrace from the Soviet Union.

With such stigma upon her, she never would be admitted to Communist China or any of the European satellites, they apparently reasoned.

Far more baffling than the Strong affair was the strange case of Archibald Johnstone, editor of the British Ministry of Information's Russian-language weekly, *British Ally*. Last year, Mr. Johnstone walked out of his office one bright May morning at lunch time, never to return. Two days later, a full page letter, denouncing British policy and the British Embassy in typical Communist party-line language appeared in *Pravda*. It was signed with Mr. Johnstone's name.

His defection apparently was unpremeditated, for he left behind him at his lodgings his entire wardrobe, his passport, and a very large sum in cash. He never called for them. Many weeks later, Burobin asked the British Embassy to turn over Mr. Johnstone's personal possessions to it, allegedly on his request. The embassy let Burobin have the clothing, but added that the passport and money could be delivered only to Mr. Johnstone personally.

He never came to claim them, though on one occasion he was briefly produced at a press conference, where in a strained, mechanical voice he read a prepared statement similar in content to the *Pravda* letter, avoided answering personal questions, and was promptly whisked off when the conference adjourned.

XXIII

WILL THE REGIMENTED WORK-SLAVES REVOLT?

THE SOVIET UNION is a going concern. No longer can skeptics and critics discount the socialized order established there as "visionary" or "utopian." Having weathered the crucial test of war, the new "society" has graduated from the experimental stage and entered a period of rapid growth at home and swift expansion abroad. Any realistic approach must be premised on acceptance of these facts.

The Soviet system will not collapse because of unworkability. The oft-repeated truisms on the harmful effects of the suppression of private economic initiative retain a measure of validity. But these effects have been offset, partially at any rate, by the quest for new incentives.

Moreover, the lower efficiency standards of Soviet performance are to some extent neutralized by the fact that, under Soviet co-ordinated economic planning, some of the waste and duplication of competitive economy are eliminated.

Paradoxically, some of the—from the Western standpoint—most obnoxious features of the Soviet system, such as lack of individual freedom, regimentation of labor, and intellectual compulsion, have proved in practice sources of functional strength—ignoring the moral stake involved—

compared with a capitalist economy. This is a measure of the challenge now facing the free world.

There are other practical advantages. The Soviet system eliminates many of the economic contradictions of capitalism, such as unemployment and crises of over-production. The clue to this is total centralized control.

Under the Soviet system, a single, highly integrated, purposeful organization exercises complete authority over raw material and food resources, industrial plant equipment, supply and distribution of all commodities and manpower.

In an age when technological advances impose unified direction on an ever-larger scale, this gives the Soviets a formidable advantage. This is of special import at a time when mankind stands on the threshold of the atomic age.

Of all the sweeping economic powers wielded by the Soviet state, the most striking is the total command of manpower. Under free economy, the worker is legally at liberty to sell his labor as he chooses or withhold it altogether. The Soviets make much of the claim that in the Soviet Union there is no unemployment, that the right to work is guaranteed to everyone. They fail to stress that the right to choose employment or not to work—to withhold one's labor power—is denied both individually and collectively (the latter by denial of the right to strike).

A stringent system of controls binds the Soviet worker or employee to his job as fast as ever galley slave was chained to his oar. The person who walks out on his job is guilty of desertion and subject to severe penalties. Any applicant for a job must submit his "work booklet," wherein the entire record of his past employment is inscribed, including past violations of "labor discipline" and penalties incurred. And unless he left his last employment with due authorization

and has documentary evidence thereof, he is refused a job and, in many cases, turned over to the proper authorities for disciplining.

Standing behind this system is, of course, the enforcement power of the MVD. Under the guidance of Laurenty P. Beria, the MVD developed vast forced-labor projects—lumber camps, gold mining, irrigation, railroad construction—and also provided much of the manpower required for operation of such projects.

When the German attack came, Beria flung his resources into the war effort and achieved such stupendous feats as the construction of a railway line to the Pechora River Basin in the Far North over hundreds of miles of frozen tundra and the mining and shipping of Pechora coal to replace the loss of the Donbas.

Since the war, the MVD has had new fields in which to operate. In June, 1949, for example, an estimated thirty thousand persons of Greek, Turkish and Jewish origin were deported from Black Sea coastal areas on three hours' notice. Entire peoples, like the Crimean Tatars or the Chechens in the North Caucasus, were transported in toto to the depths of Central Asia. The Greek Embassy in Moscow has estimated that about fifty thousand Greek subjects who formerly lived in southern Russia along and near the coast are now in Kazakstan.

All these activities in turn helped replenish the forced-labor reserves for new and vaster projects, including atomic developments.

This type of compulsion may tend to make Soviet labor less efficient than labor in lands where workers are legally permitted to change jobs when and as they wish. But what-

ever Soviet labor may, as a result, lack in quality, is at least partially offset by unlimited quantity.

Use of female labor on a scale unparalleled in any other modern industrial economy helps provide the Soviets with a practically inexhaustible supply of man-power—and woman-power.

There is a good factual basis for the Soviet claim that since the Revolution women have entered walks of life from which they previously were virtually barred. This is particularly true of the professions.

Today, there are many Soviet female engineers, teachers and physicians, and women comprise an absolute majority of textile workers and streetcar and bus conductors. But it still is a considerable cry from the "complete equality" claimed by Soviet propaganda.

Yet, whereas to date no woman has penetrated into the upper precincts of political power, at the lowest level women have largely supplanted men in heavy, unskilled, manual labor. (It should be added that the Soviet wage scale is so geared that few women, even married women with families, can afford not to avail themselves of the right to work.)

In Soviet cities, it is largely the women who dig the ditches, clear the snow, carry loads, and do heavy work on construction jobs. These are muscular, thick-set peasant women who would resent being called the weaker sex. With such cheaply expendable cheap labor at hand, the Soviets often find it profitable to save wear and tear on machinery.

During the past eighteen months, new gas mains were laid in much of residential Moscow, making natural gas, newly piped from distant Saratov, available in thousands of kitchens.

In front of our house, I watched a female pick-and-shovel brigade pry up the cobblestones, dig a deep trench, lay the pipe, cover it up, replace the cobblestones, pry them up again, and re-excavate the pipe to install leadoffs, cover it and dig it up a third time to locate a leak—all within the space of six months.

The third excavation was made in winter-time when the women had to hack their way through ice and frozen ground with crowbars.

Then, in the spring, after the filled-in trench had settled, they had to repave the street all over again. This same performance was repeated on many a Moscow street.

While such waste of effort would bankrupt a civil contractor in the United States, it made no appreciable dent in the Soviet exchequer.

The serf-like bondage of the "free" Soviet citizen to his job is one element of an unrelaxing economic strangle-hold upon the masses. Equally important is the total state control of the production of food and consumer goods, a control constantly used to coerce and cajole, reward and punish, in the interests of the Communist party-line.

In the past, the government deliberately starved the refractory peasantry into submission to collectivization. Today, the Soviets are vigorously wooing the loyalty of urban workers and intellectuals by making more and better foodstuffs available to them at lower prices. This is made possible by the substantial gains in postwar production, plus the economic benefits reaped through control of eastern Europe.

Soviet postwar economic progress is not only a tribute to the country's recuperative powers, but to the effectiveness of large-scale economic planning. The principle, which the Soviets pioneered, has now been accepted and adopted in some

measure throughout the civilized world, on a national and even international scale. Perhaps the crowning expression is the Economic Co-operation Administration.

In meeting the Communist challenge, the democratic West now seeks to demonstrate that economic planning can succeed in a free society, without the physical and mental compulsions on which the Soviets rely so heavily. This is vital, for one of the greatest dangers to democracy is lest the West, in opposing communism, resort to the same methods the Communists employ, and lest human liberty succumb to some equally odious brand of totalitarianism.

One saw this happen in Germany, where Nazism largely began and developed as an anti-Communist crusade. Historians long will study the similar methods of the two anti-theoretical systems. Hitler used economic pressure for political ends in the same way Stalin does. He, too, wooed the working class with improved living standards. Ironically, the wealth of eastern Europe, now flowing into the Soviet Union to raise the Russian workers' living standards, ten years back was pouring into Germany, where it helped convince the German workers and intellectuals that it paid to belong to the *Herrenvolk* (master race).

The common denominator of Nazism and Communism is in the appeal to materialism, in the conviction that violence and coercion can settle any issue, in the belief that power justifies any means. Above all, both inherit, from a common philosophic source, the rejection of fixed standards of right and wrong, true and false. Without these moral compass points to steer by, no nation can cleave to the course of progress. Technology and organizing efficiency instead of benefiting mankind, then operate for evil. In the Nazi *Weltanschauung* (philosophy), it accounts for concentration

camp, lethal gas chambers, and dreams of "tomorrow the world."

In the Soviet Weltanschauung, it has led to forced-labor camps, mass purges, police terror, and dreams of world communism—and the end not yet in sight.

Yet people in the West, who, from mental laziness, lapse of memory, or sheer exasperation, advocate a preventive war as the only way out at present, should be reminded that the recent war generated problems fully as serious as those it solved, plus the tremendous senseless destruction. Even in vanquished Germany, final victory over Nazism still hinges on whether the German people can be won over to democratic ideals.

The notion that communism can be disposed of effectively by military means is even more absurd. Not only is such a way likely to result in universal ruin, visited on victors and vanquished alike, but the decisive battle would still remain to be fought in the realm of ideas—and for the possession not of territory but of men's minds.

In the coming years, the strongest, most determined foes of the police state are likely to develop east of the Iron Curtain, where not even forcible indoctrination can neutralize the lessons of immediate knowledge and experience. There are in Russia today legions of thinking, intelligent people who chafe under the omnipotent police state and long with their whole being for freedom.

The Russians as a race are neither domineering nor aggressive nor xenophobe. They are warmly human, gregarious, and endowed with an avid and friendly curiosity about other peoples. All these qualities tend instinctively to alienate them, if not from the Soviet system, at least from many of its present policies at home and abroad.

Moreover, thousands upon thousands of people in all walks of life have at some time sustained some deep personal hurt from the police regime. Each new purge or "ideological campaign" adds new contingents of malcontents. While all open criticism of the regime is effectively prevented and the ears and eyes of the MVD are omnipresent, such is human nature that every individual has at least one person he fully trusts, and thus an endless chain extends, even though it lacks organized form.

The mental outlook of the average Soviet citizen passes through three main stages, according to age groups:

1. Below twenty-five years, most susceptible to intense indoctrination—the glowing visions conjured by propaganda appeal to the youthful imagination, unsullied as yet by worldly experience.

2. From twenty-five to thirty-five, gradual frustration of hopes, destroyed by contact with daily life and conditions.

3. After thirty-five, final disillusionment. This breeds hard, selfish cynicism, resigned, routine-conditioned apathy, or intense inner rebellion, depending on the status and make-up of the individual. The men who staff the party and state apparatus come under the first category (cynicism). The majority of citizenry fall in the second (apathy). But many, at the least sign of hope, would gravitate toward the third (rebellion).

The opening months of the Nazi invasion disclosed how deeply disaffection had eaten into the fabric of Soviet society—before Hitler's political blunders and cruelties repelled even those who at first looked upon the Kremlin as the greater evil.

It is essential that the West learn to distinguish between the police state and the Soviet people, for if the former are

implacable foes, the latter, unless stupidly antagonized, are potential friends and allies.

And it is they who eventually will decide their country's destiny. ●

XXIV

THE VOICE THAT HAUNTS

THE TRIPLE WRAPPER of mystery, riddle and enigma which, paraphrasing Churchill, cloaked Soviet intentions some years ago has evaporated since the war. Today the Soviet policy pattern no longer is concealed, but publicly advertised in such classic boasts as Molotov's: "All roads lead to Communism."

The mantle of inscrutability did yeoman service during the war years, when it was politic to hoodwink the Western Allies as to Kremlin plans. When Stalin reassured the West early in 1944 that he wanted a "free and democratic" Poland, the West eagerly took him at his word, little realizing that Stalin was giving the familiar, reliable adjectives in a highly specialized Communist content.

This marked the beginning of the cat-and-mouse game of "people's democracy," now in its final stage. The Communists acclaimed "people's democracy"—and the democratic elements took them at their word—as a brand-new kind of state wherein socialist and capitalist elements were happily blended, combining the best features of East and West.

Since then the world has watched while the Communists swallowed the democratic parties, including socialists, piecemeal, and—having achieved monopoly of power—put forward a purely Communist program. "People's democracy" was redefined as nothing more nor less than the old "dictatorship of the proletariat"—that is, Communist dictator-

ship. The process of assimilation has reached a point where little remains to be done short of outright incorporation of the satellite states into Russia.

Not only has Soviet policy in eastern Europe been laid bare, the aims and methods of Communism everywhere are out in the open. Moreover, the relationship of the various Communist parties to the Kremlin, once tangled in a maze of double talk, has been fully exposed, largely as a consequence of the cold war and the European Recovery Program.

Today, with Soviet aims plain to all who care to see, the foremost question in many persons' thoughts is: Are the Soviet leaders, who now have an atom bomb, bent on war?

The best answer to this query is: No—and yes. The contradiction in this answer is resolved by the time element. For the immediate, even the foreseeable, future, the answer is No. The Kremlin, for one thing, is convinced that time is on its side, and that with every passing day the ratio of world power shifts in its favor. The long-term answer is Yes. The Communists believe that though a given conflict may be averted, an eventual clash between the two antagonistic world systems is inevitable and will result necessarily in the triumph of Communism.

Accordingly, the Soviets, while expecting to avoid war at present, give military preparation top priority in all their economic planning. They also run certain calculated war risks for immediate objectives, as in the case of the Berlin blockade. Nevertheless, the Kremlin realizes it would be hard to sell the Soviet people on a war of aggression, and that knowledge counsels caution at many a turn.

Therein lies the most substantial margin of hope for peace and avoidance of a war. The West, by putting its own house in economic order, can destroy the roots of Communism in

its own dooryard and refute Soviet propaganda in practice. Meanwhile, avoiding appeasement, the West should continue patiently to explore every possibility for genuine agreement with the Soviets on vital issues.

It should remember that, despite doctrinaire aims and outlook, the Soviet leaders can be forced to accept facts. Stalin himself, in an empirical mood, once proclaimed: "The logic of things is the strongest of all logic."

The stakes in this game are enough to justify any expenditure of effort and patience. Western statesmen driven to exasperation in their dealings with the Soviets might derive solace from the following commentary by the historian Vladimir Klyuchevsky on seventeenth century Russian diplomacy:

"The diplomatic methods of the Moscow Boyars (Russian aristocrats under the czars) were often the despair of foreign ambassadors, especially those who wished to deal straightforwardly and honestly. They complain bitterly of the duplicity and abruptness of Moscow diplomats, of their inconsistency, and of the levity with which they made and broke promises. To avoid their snares, it was not enough to discover they were lying. One also had to ascertain the purpose of the lie, how to evaluate it.

"When detected lying, they did not blush, but answered reproofs with a sneer (a tactic used today by Vishinsky). No matter how precisely and positively the point of negotiation was defined and agreed, whenever necessary they always found ways, by means of various intricate interpretations, to weaken its force or even present it in another, unexpected form."

Compare this last with General Lucius D. Clay's observation, anent the Berlin blockade: "The Soviet government

seems able to find technical reasons at will to justify the violation of understandings."

Yet General Clay, by his resoluteness and patience in dealing with the Berlin blockade, set a historic precedent on how to deal with the Soviets successfully—and short of war.

While seeking a realistic *modus vivendi* with the Soviet government, the United States in particular should miss no opportunity to proffer the hand of friendship to the Russian people over the head of the Soviet government, and to refute Communist propaganda to the effect that America is scheming to attack the Soviet Union.

A splendid beginning along these lines has been made by the "Voice of America" Russian-language broadcast programs. The best tribute to their effectiveness is the all-out scale of the Soviet jamming effort. Before the jamming, we had many direct indications that the programs commanded a wide and eager audience.

Even today, what filters through the wall of interference is a far more powerful weapon than the atom bomb—a weapon for peace, that reaches men's minds and creates instead of destroying.

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